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Gift Guide

All the ideas you need
pg 19

Infant girl born in parking lot on cold night

DELIVERY Likely warming the hearts of the chilly firefighters on scene, a baby girl entered the world at the intersection of Glenmore Trail and 37 Street SW yesterday evening.

Station 20 firefighters were called out just before 6:30 p.m. to the report of an imminent childbirth at a parking lot near the intersection.

When firefighters arrived to the SUV, the baby was already crowning and the newborn girl was delivered within five minutes. EMS, also hampered by weather and traffic conditions, arrived on time to clamp the umbilical cord — in -13 C.

The baby and parents were then transported to hospital via ambulance.

METRO CALGARY

News on the Move

What's this barcode for?
Learn how to scan the barcode with the instructions at the top of pg 3

Entertainment pg 37

Ex sues Cage for fraud

Canada pg 8

Detainee was abused: General

On the web

Visit metronews.ca for news updates

Flames

Holding the fort

JEFF MCINTOSH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

The Atlanta Thrashers' Maxim Afinogenov tries to get the puck past Calgary Flames goalie Miikka Kiprusoff during first-period NHL hockey action in Calgary yesterday. The Flames beat the Thrashers 3-1. Story, page 16.

Hockey coach faces sex-related charges

Alleged incidents with female player, 15, believed to be isolated

KRISTA SYLVESTER
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A 33-year-old Calgary hockey coach is facing charges after allegations a 15-year-old female player was sexually assaulted, according to police.

The alleged incidents stem from a three-day period starting Nov. 10. On Nov. 12, the teen's parents alerted police, who say the alleged assaults occurred in Calgary and away from the rink.

"The relationship took them outside of the bounds of what would occur typically between a player and a coach in a hockey rink or on the ice," Det. Jeff Klinger said. "And it's the relationship outside that deteriorated to the point where sexual charges were laid."

While it's not clear whether the alleged incidents were consensual, Klinger said the major concern was the age difference and the fact the coach was in a position of authority over the minor.

Klinger said the coach has shown a "pattern of behaviour" in the past but didn't elaborate, and added that at this point, police don't believe there are other alleged victims.

Hockey Calgary president Perry Cavanaugh said the coach stepped down from his duties after the investigation began. Cavanaugh said the man had only been coaching for weeks after taking a hiatus a few years ago.

Cavanagh deflected criticism that background checks are not mandatory and said he couldn't confirm if the coach had received one when he took on the position.

"It is a recommendation that certainly background checks are completed ... We leave that to the respective associations," he added.

Val Hokanson, a Calgary hockey mom of three, said she isn't worried about her kids in light of the charges.

"I think it was an isolated incident. I am just careful and very involved in my children's hockey to begin with," she said.

Michael Shawn Bourgeois is charged with sexual interference with a child under 16, sexual counselling of a child under 16, sexual counselling of a youth by a person in authority and sexual assault. He will appear in court again in January.

Hockey Canada — Speak Out Program

- A program in place and adapted by Hockey Calgary, designed to inform parents about what to watch for in terms of physical, mental, sexual and verbal abuse.

Mayor heading to climate summit

Go Green

DARREN KRAUSE
darren.krause@metronews.ca

COPENHAGEN Calgary has a climate-change leadership story — and the mayor is headed overseas to tell it.

Mayor Dave Bronconnier, along with over 60 other world mayors — including the heads of Toronto and Vancouver — will attend the Copenhagen Climate Summit for mayors Dec. 13 to 17, and he's intent on demonstrating our city's leading role in curbing greenhouse-gas emissions.

"I think when you look at Calgary's track record, we have a very good story to tell nationally and internationally in terms of the leadership role we have taken as a community to reduce our greenhouse-gas emissions," Bronconnier said.

He will be speaking as a part of the "Clean Energy" panel, with mayors from Barcelona, Zurich, and Oslo to share Calgary's green innovations.

Bronconnier pointed out the city's operations are on track to reduce GHG emissions by 60 per cent from 1990 to 2012. He also highlighted projects such as the wind-powered LRT, 100 per cent renewable electricity by 2012 with Enmax, and the recent Calgary Climate Change Accord among the world's energy cities.

The cost of the mayor's trip is $13,000.

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Local

"I'm really disappointed we have such weak leadership on this issue."

Sarah Renner, left, one of 20 athletes, after signing a letter to Prime Minister Stephen Harper urging him to support a binding agreement at the ongoing UN climate summit in Copenhagen — because climate change could affect winter sports. THE CANADIAN PRESS

METRO INTERNATIONAL NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR 2009 Festival of Media Awards

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Calgary tweets

• @oddroot Well what was positive thoughts about #yyc lrt this morning are dashed by this evening, 15 mins between trains and are packed past capacity

metronews.ca WHAT'S ONLINE TODAY

Video Peter MacKay steps up government defence in Afghan detainee controversy after top commander does about-face at **metronews.ca/canada**

Lotteries

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Weeding out a cause

Investigators probe whether former grow-op played part in Citadel fire

KRISTA SYLVESTER
krista.sylvester@metronews.ca

The Calgary police arson unit is investigating whether a former grow-op contributed to the massive Citadel fire with damages now pegged at more than $3 million.

Arson Det. Scott Sampson said the house on Citadel Forest Place NW was a marijuana grow-operation five years ago, but received remediation and was approved by the city in 2007.

"It's something we're looking into, but it's going to take a couple of days before we can do the investigation," he said as police set up a heated tent to help battle the cold weather that has plagued the investigation.

Tess Gordey and her husband, Ed Everest, were one of the five families who lost their homes in the fire and she said she wouldn't speculate on the cause of the fire just yet.

"A girlfriend of mine called me today and said they heard there was a grow-op, or something and the house certainly has the history of a grow-op," she said.

"I'm interested to see how it is going to turn out."

City chief building Insp. Kevin Griffiths said while they can't speculate on the cause of the fire until the investigation is over, all former grow-operations need to pass remediation inspections before they are livable again.

"In general, Alberta Health Services issues an order of the house not being habitable until all remediation requirements are met," he added.

ROBIN KUNISKI/FOR METRO CALGARY

Safety fencing was put up around five Citadel homes destroyed in a massive fire over the weekend, as fire and arson investigators began the process of piecing together how the fire started.

Buses hit the highway in effort to offer choice

DARREN KRAUSE
darren.krause@metronews.ca

"We've had a really positive response to the changes. We're happy (riders) are happy."
Jen Mazer, transit planner

TRANSIT Calgarians made suggestions — and Calgary Transit responded.

After a hearing a number of complaints over the deployment of the SE Bus Rapid Transit, Calgary Transit went back to the drawing board, and as of this past Monday, commuters may have noticed a difference in their ride to work.

Initially, all the SE Express buses travelled the same route as the regular BRT route, according to senior transit planner, Jen Mazer, with buses taken off of Deerfoot Trail.

After rider response, select buses will now hit the freeway and have fewer stops, offering riders a transportation selection.

"What we really wanted to do is give people a choice," said Mazer, adding that Deerfoot routes have been added prior to peak — so before 6:30 a.m.

Mazer also said SE Express routes — 102, 103, 117, 133 and 151 — which used to stop along the BRT route, will now only have three stops at key transfer points, instead of 10.

"We've had a really positive response to the changes. We're happy (riders) are happy," said Mazer.

Visit metronews.ca to watch metrotube of the day

CALGARY OBITUARIES

CalgaryObits.com notes the following deaths in our community:

ADAIR, Clifford Willard (Cliff)
ALLISON, Madeleine
ARORA, Mohinder Singh
BISSON, Elena (nee Moroni)
BOETTGER , Heinz Ernst
COWIE, William (Bill)
CUMIFORD, Donna Lynn
DEL BELLO, Maria
DONALD, Margaret H. (Marg) (nee Phillips)
DUSTIN, Maie Hiroko (nee Noda)
GREY EYES , Janice (nee Calf Robe)
HEJNA, Jerry
HEUCHERT, Edward Graham (Ted)
HINTZ, Ernest (Ernie) Arthur
JACQUES, Lena Henrietta (nee Halldorson)
LANGE , Kenneth
LEE, Kathleen
LIGHTFOOT, Robert (Bob) John
MAJOR , Anton Sr.
MILLER, Vernon Edward
NOURSE, Lee Roy
PEIRCE , Hubert (Bert) Charles
PLUMMER, Fred (Freddie) A.
ROBB, Erva
SCHRAMM, Mary (nee Hanowski)
SUCHE, Robin Andrea
TUFF, Yvonne Kathleen
TWA, Russell Maitland
VETERE, Rosa (nee Iaquinta)
WILLMENT, Joan
WORTON, Cecil

For full obituaries go to CalgaryObits.com

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City says Inglewood bird sanctuary has that elusive Christmas gift
Got a nature lover you need a Christmas gift for? The City of Calgary invites troubled gift shoppers searching for that perfect gift to try the Inglewood Bird Sanctuary's Nature Centre. They claim gifts are available for any budget and all ages. METRO CALGARY

Police take slain man's son in for questioning

CUSTODY The son of slain 60-year-old Harinder Singh was taken into custody by the Calgary Police Tuesday evening after they received information a vehicle fitting the description of one connected to the incident was in the community of Kingsland.

Ranjit Singh, 30, was interviewed by a CPS homicide detective in relation to a domestic dispute in Castleridge early Monday morning that left his father dead.

Woman seriously hurt in collision

AIRDRIE A two-vehicle collision south of Airdrie sent one woman to hospital with serious injuries via STARS air ambulance, Airdrie RCMP said.

Police said the driver lost control of her southbound Suzuki Tracker, crossed the centre median and struck the rear wheels of a tractor-trailer. The tractor-trailer driver was uninjured.

Road conditions may have been a factor.

METRO CALGARY

Vandals can't ice show: CDA

Downtown group says Season of Wonder display will carry on

KRISTA SYLVESTER
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Somewhere in the city there is a Grinch who decapitated a downtown Christmas ice sculpture but the holiday display is sleighing along despite the vandalism.

After ice sculptor Lee Ross from Frozen Memories spent 45 hours sculpting a life-size horse and sleigh on Stephen Avenue on Friday, vandals destroyed the centrepiece beyond recognition Saturday.

"It's a shame, it was a lot of work and because of the timing and the weather, nobody got to see how beautiful it was," Ross' wife, Jana, said, adding another sculpture was also destroyed in Banff.

Ross said the sleigh was made so people could sit in it and take photos, but there are still several smaller pieces on display and there will also be carving sessions throughout the week.

The sculpture was part of the Calgary Downtown Association's The Season of Wonder celebration on Stephen Avenue set to run throughout December, but they won't let the destruction dampen their holiday mood, according to the association's Caralyn Macdonald.

"It's really disappointing because it was such an amazing piece of work and the largest part of the display. The head was torn off and they really went to town on it," she said.

The display will remain in place, and at night will transform the avenue into a light and ice sculpture show, Macdonald added.

ROBIN KUNISKI/FOR METRO CALGARY

Ice sculptures have been set up around Stephen Avenue mall for the Calgary Downtown Association's Season of Wonder — but vandals destroyed one of the more intricate statues.

ShareYourViews
calgaryletters@metronews.ca

Agency charged with collecting illegal job fees

COUNTS An employment agency has been charged with collecting thousands of dollars in fees to place foreign workers in fast-food jobs in Calgary.

J.F. Garcia Manpower Services, owned by Jose Garcia, is alleged to have charged two workers from the Philippines $6,000 each to find them jobs at fast-food outlets in 2007.

The restaurant owners contacted provincial authorities when they became aware of the fees.

Garcia faces two counts of charging workers illegal fees and two counts of operating an employment agency without a provincial licence. He is set to appear in court Jan. 28 in Calgary.

Service Alberta Minister Heather Klimchuk says the province's rules around charging employment fees prevent employment agencies from taking advantage of workers."These fees can be a financial hardship for people working to improve their situation or to provide money for their families."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Residential permits up, overall building permits down
November residential permits were up by over $100 million from 2008, the city said yesterday — but overall building permits were down 35 per cent in 2008. METRO CALGARY

ROBIN KUNSKI/FOR METRO CALGARY

Citing millions in necessary renovations, the board for the South YMCA decided Tuesday the building would close, ending nearly a half-century of recreation in the Haysboro area.

Goodbye to the Y

Soaring repair costs cited for closure

KRISTA SYLVESTER
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The YMCA in south Calgary made a "difficult" decision to close its doors next year to members as renovation costs have soared to the millions, according to officials.

The 47-year-old Haddon Road SW location is losing $200,000 a year and needs $5 million in repairs including a costly new roof pegged at $500,000, YMCA vice-president Kelly Smith said.

"It's a very unfortunate situation and we didn't take this decision lightly as this facility has been a part of the family for a very long time," Smith said of the unanimous board decision made Tuesday night.

Although the lease with the city runs until 2063, the city of Calgary understands the situation and will take the building location over as of September, 2010, Smith added.

Even though the YMCA is closing doors on the building and on most of the renovations needed, they will be approving "critical" work needed for the roof.

"There is a part of the roof that needs the work immediately and we will take care of that," Smith said.

Some YMCA members were understanding of the decision when asked yesterday at the facility, but some were upset they weren't told of the impending closure sooner, including Maria, who wishes to withhold her last name.

"Maybe something could have been done, maybe funds could have been raised. I just don't get why they wouldn't have wanted to ask for help," she said.

But Kelly says while the board didn't seek members' input in the matter, they did try to work with city partners to come up with a solution, without success.

U of C psych clinic wins award

KRISTA SYLVESTER
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A University of Calgary psychology clinic has been recognized with a national award for its innovative access to services. The Canadian Psychological Association Foundation (CPAF) awarded the University of Calgary's Applied Psychological and Education Services (U-CAPES) the 2009 Innovative Access to Psychological Services Award. Professor and director of the clinic Kelly Schwartz said the award is an honour for all of those involved in running the clinic including the psychology degree graduate students that work there and the faculty that supports them.

"We're just pleased and really excited ... because we're still relatively young..."
Professor
Kelly Schwartz

"We're just pleased and really excited about this award, especially because we're still relatively young and in our fourth year," he said of the distinction.

Schwartz said the clinic is able to offer children and families services at more affordable rates with much less wait times.

"I don't think this award could have been tailored made for us any better," he added.

News in brief

BILL 50 Mayor Dave Bronconnier wouldn't comment yesterday on reported allegations by Enmax CEO Gary Holden of backroom dealing by the province in regards to Bill 50 and proposed electricity transmission. Bronconnier said the province is out soliciting input from Albertans, something he says the city has favoured since the start of the process.

16 AVE The city announced yesterday after seven years, the majority of construction on 16 Ave North is complete along the important transportation corridor, with six lanes of traffic now open. The city is touting a more pedestrian friendly streetscape, improved mobility for motorists and better access for business. Construction to be completed in 2010 includes landscaping and sidewalk upgrades at 16 Ave and 5 St NE.

METRO CALGARY

Injured hockey player sues for worker's compensation

A Canadian hockey player hurt while playing for a minor league team in Rhode Island is suing for worker's compensation in Michigan. The state Supreme Court hears oral arguments Wednesday on 39-year-old Andy Bezeau's appeal of a Michigan board's ruling denying him coverage. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

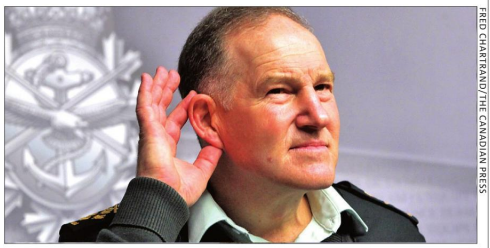
Canada

Grits say equal pay a human right

Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff says equal pay for work of equal value is a basic human right that should never be put up for grabs at the collective bargaining table. To that end, he has introduced a private member's bill aimed at reversing a controversial measure in the 2009 federal budget. The budget essentially reclassified pay equity as a labour issue to be negotiated in collective agreements, stripping the Canadian Human Rights Commission of its authority. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Top general says prisoner beaten

The country's top military commander reversed himself yesterday and put rising pressure on the government with the explosive assertion that a beaten and bloodied Canadian-captured prisoner was indeed abused by Afghan authorities prior to 2007.



FRED CHARTRAND/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Gen. Walter Natynczyk holds a news conference at National Defence headquarters in Ottawa yesterday.

The about-face by Gen. Walt Natynczyk — who had earlier insisted Canadians had not detained the suspected Taliban in June 2006 — undercuts one of the Conservative government's key lines of defence in the widening controversy over the handling of insurgent prisoners.

Defence Minister Peter MacKay has categorically insisted "there is not a single, proven allegation" of abuse prior to 2007.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper brushed aside the revelation by saying it "confirms what we have been saying all along."

But, in a recalibration of the government's position, Harper told the House of Commons that the military acted when they uncovered "substantive evidence" of abuse. Previously, Harper and MacKay have said there was no such evidence.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

New ambassador Doer headed to Copenhagen

Go Green

CLIMATE Canada's man in Washington is going to Copenhagen. The Harper government will dispatch Ambassador Gary Doer to climate talks in the Danish capital, The Canadian Press has learned.

Gary Doer

Sources confirm Canada's newly minted ambassador to the United States will be part of a 16-member group of "eminent expert advisers."

The group is also made up of heads of industry, including the CEOs of Calgary-based companies Atco Ltd. and TransAlta Corp.

Some members of the group apparently met recently in Calgary for a pre-Copenhagen briefing with Environment Minister Jim Prentice.

Prentice's office declined to provide more details on Doer's tabbing for the climate talks, or on the advisory group. A spokesman would only say an announcement on the Copenhagen advisers is expected this weekend.

But a Canadian Embassy spokeswoman later confirmed Doer's attendance at the talks.

Doer, known as Manitoba's "Teflon premier" during his decade-long reign, may help Canada wipe some of the soot from its tarnished image at the climate talks.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Dog kept going after being shot

ONTARIO A dog that police say "appeared to be a pit bull" continued to fight even after it had been shot after its jaws latched onto a police officer's leg.

"The bullet hit the dog in the spine, so it went down fast, but it continued to growl and snarl after it let go," Ontario provincial police Const. Peter Bertin said.

The dog attacked the male officer early Sunday while officers were responding to a complaint about excessive noise.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Liberals want more rural mail service
Federal Liberals are pushing for the restoration of rural mail service cut by the Harper government. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mother relieved as suspect charged

Cousin of slain N.B. teen faces murder rap

The mother of a 16-year-old girl whose death and disappearance gripped residents of a small northern New Brunswick community says she feels a small measure of justice after the victim's cousin was charged with murder.

RCMP charged Curtis Bonnell with first-degree murder after a massive investigation into the death of his cousin, Hilary Bonnell.

"It's a little bit of justice for my little girl," Hilary's mother, Pamela Fillier, said yesterday. "(But) it's not over. It's far from over."

The body of Hilary Bonnell of Esgenoopetitj First Nation, also known as Burnt Church, was found last month buried in a remote wooded area that's part of a former military training area.

Hilary Bonnell

She had been missing since Sept. 5 after attending a house party the night before on the reserve of 1,100, setting off an extensive search.

Her last confirmed sighting was recorded on surveillance footage at a convenience store in the community.

RCMP Insp. Roch Fortin said the investigation, which involved more than 200 officers, was arduous from the beginning.

"The investigation has been complex and we have had RCMP members literally working around the clock since we first received the call that Hilary was missing," Fortin told a news conference in nearby Tracadie-Sheila.

"The support from Hilary's family and from the people of the First Nation of Burnt Church has been appreciated."

He alleged that Curtis Bonnell acted alone, adding that the location where the girl's body was found was very remote and that no one in the community should feel they failed by not finding her sooner.

Bonnell has not had an opportunity to enter a plea and the murder charge against him has not been proven in court.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

PLANE CRASH An investigation into a plane crash in Alberta that killed five people concluded a similar crash could happen again. The Transportation Safety Board found that the single-engine Piper aircraft was overloaded, the pilot lacked refresher training and the aircraft's gyroscope failed due to lack of maintenance. The board suggests that a similar combination of errors would make it difficult for a pilot to handle an aircraft. The plane was owned by A.D. Williams Engineering, and the crash near Wainwright killed company president Reagan Williams, two senior employees and two contractors.

CAMPING The B.C. Court of Appeal has upheld a lower court ruling that struck down a city of Victoria bylaw that banned camping in city parks by the homeless. A judge ruled last fall that it is unconstitutional to restrict camping in its parks if all shelter beds in the city are full.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Montreal **Back to '76**

PAUL CHIASSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bringing the past and future of Canada's Olympic Games together, Olympic torchbearer and short-track speedskater Jean-Francois Monette stands in front of Montreal's Olympic Stadium — the site of the 1976 Summer Olympics — during the Olympic torch relay yesterday in Montreal.

Commons backs HST in Ont., B.C.

TAX The HST appears to be a done deal for Ontario — and a big step closer to reality for British Columbia.

The House of Commons voted 253-37 yesterday in favour of a 13 per cent harmonized sales tax in Ontario, 12 per cent in B.C.

The Conservatives, Liberals and Bloc Québécois supported the controversial measure, while the NDP opposed it.

Just hours earlier, the Ontario legislature passed its own legislation and B.C. is expected to follow suit early in the new year.

The Senate will now deal with the federal HST bill, which combines the GST with provincial sales tax and transfers money to the two provinces for making the change.

Several MPs were absent for the vote, including Conservative Dona Cadman and Liberal Keith Martin who both represent ridings in B.C. where the tax is unpopular.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Comment

The persistence of porn

Relating

I feel I owe an apology to Simon Louis Lajeunesse on behalf of my (and his) gender.

The Université de Montréal researcher, studying the effects of pornography on its male viewers, looked for a control group of guys who had never been exposed to it.

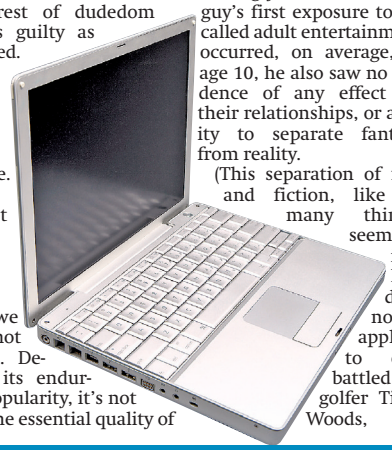
He could find none.

"Guys who do not watch pornography do not exist," he told the Montreal Gazette.

It's encouraging that Lajeunesse found no evidence of ill effects often ascribed to pornography by its critics, because whatever dirty movies do to us, they seem to be doing it to pretty much every man and no small number of women.

The study's subjects said they watched an average of 40 minutes a week. I hasten to mention that your particular boyfriend/husband/whatever is telling you the truth if he never sullies his eyes with such filth. Neither do I. Swear.

But your virtuous fella and I are obviously just about the only ones — complete statistical freaks. The rest of dudedom stands guilty as charged.



Sorry about that, Prof. Lajeunesse.

We cannot deny your findings, and we are not proud. Despite its enduring popularity, it's not as if the essential quality of X-rated cinema has improved vastly since 1975, when Erica Jong famously declared, "My reaction to porn films is as follows: After the first 10 minutes, I want to go home and screw. After the first 20 minutes, I never want to screw again as long as I live."

While Lajeunesse's research somewhat disturbingly found that a guy's first exposure to so-called adult entertainment occurred, on average, at age 10, he also saw no evidence of any effect on their relationships, or ability to separate fantasy from reality.

(This separation of fact and fiction, like so many things, seemingly does not apply to embattled golfer Tiger Woods, whose growing roster of "transgressions" allegedly includes porn star Joslyn James, a.k.a. Veronica Siwik-Daniels.)

According to Lajeunesse's data, 90 per cent of the porn consumed by his interviewees came from — and this too may shock you — the Internet. A very smart woman of my intimate acquaintance expresses wonder that men get anything done all day with all that porn just sitting there at the other end of every keyboard.

This modern smut delivery system has its drawbacks, as a friend of mine discovered when he tried to explain to his wife why their computer had been laid low by viruses. He received emergency technical assistance from a computer-savvy buddy, and a little advice about safer surfing, but repairing things on the home front remained his problem.

Steve Collins offers his best guesses on relationships for Metro every two weeks.

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Bombing can't break dog-owner bond
The owner of a dog that miraculously survived a massive bombing in Baghdad returned to his collapsed home yesterday to be reunited with his pet. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

World

Trying to bridge gap

Satisfying both rich, poor nations not easy, says U.S. envoy

The United States for the first time outlined a dual path yesterday toward cutting greenhouse gases that would involve both the Obama administration and Congress.

Speaking at the United Nations climate conference in Copenhagen, Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa Jackson described the EPA's decision that greenhouse gases should be regulated as complementary to U.S. legislation — not an effort to supplant the work of Congress.

"This is not an either/or moment. This is a both/and moment," she told more than 100 people who packed a U.S. meeting room in the conference centre.

Negotiators at the 192-country conference are also working to bridge the chasm between rich and poor countries over how to share the burden of fighting climate change.

Getting an agreement that satisfies both rich and poor nations would not be easy, said Todd Stern, the top U.S. climate envoy. "But I think an agreement is there to be had if we do this right," he added.

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"Ten billion will not buy developing countries' citizens enough coffins."
Lumumba Di-Aping

Lumumba Di-Aping of Sudan, the head of the 135-member bloc of developing countries, said the $10 billion a year that has been proposed to help poor nations fight climate change paled in comparison to the more than $1 trillion already spent to rescue financial institutions.

"If this is the greatest risk that humanity faces, then how do you explain $10 billion?" he said. "Ten billion will not buy developing countries' citizens enough coffins." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

England **Muzzled voices**

LETERIS PITARAKIS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A choir of activists perform a concert highlighting the lack of education opportunities for girls in the developing world, in London yesterday. Only male members of the band were allowed to sing, while girls fell silent with gags across their mouths.

Facebook rolls out changes

WEB Facebook has rolled out promised changes to beef up privacy controls, allowing users to decide exactly who sees status updates, pictures and other content.

Facebook's 350 million users are now being prompted to update their privacy settings based on the new system of controls. Users can choose to make their information accessible to anyone on the Internet, only friends, friends of friends, or only specific people. Users can also choose to send content to all their friends with the exception of just one person or a few people — a boss, or an ex-boyfriend, perhaps.

Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg signalled the changes were coming last week. The changes also follow updates to Facebook's privacy policy posted in late October, which were in part based on recommendations filed by Canada's privacy commissioner Jennifer Stoddart.

Facebook elaborated more on the differences between deactivating and deleting an account, and what happens to an account after a user has died — issues that were raised by Stoddart. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Drunk night leads to amputations

PENNSYLVANIA A woman who drank herself unconscious says a hospital didn't properly treat her, resulting in partial amputations of both of her legs. Shanna Hiles' medical malpractice suit against Uniontown Hospital says she passed out while sitting on the floor with her legs tucked under her. Hiles was in that position for 12 hours, and she claims hospital officials didn't properly work to restore circulation to her legs. Instead, Hiles was transferred to a Pittsburgh hospital where both legs were amputated. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Club fire death toll hits 125
Members of a regional government in Russia overseeing a town hit by a deadly nightclub blaze resigned yesterday as the death toll from the fire rose to 125. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Gatorade dumps Tiger

Pulls Woods' drink, says decision made before recent issues

Gatorade is discontinuing its Tiger Woods drink but says it made the decision before the golfer's car accident led to a media firestorm surrounding his personal life.

The decision to drop the drink, called Tiger Focus, was first reported by trade publication Beverage Digest in an issue dated Nov. 25, two days before the incident at Woods' home in Florida.

The publication's editor, John Sicher, said he learned of the decision the week of Nov. 9. The brand — a unit of PepsiCo Inc. — says the decision does not have to do with recent events.

The drink debuted in March 2008. Beverage Digest estimates it represents less than five per cent of Gatorade's volume.

Sales volume of Tiger Focus was down 34 per cent this year through October.

Meanwhile, Woods has vanished from prime-time TV advertising since the scandal. Data from Nielsen Co. shows there have been no advertisements in prime-time featuring Woods since Nov. 29.

The research firm said the last prime-time ad to appear featuring the golfer was a 30-second ad that day for the Gillette Co. That commercial aired eight times during November, spokesman Aaron Lewis said.

There have been no other commercials since then on all broadcast networks and 19 cable networks during the evening news, prime-time, late-night and during weekend sports, he said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Medal effort dropped

- A California congressman says he won't continue his push to honour Tiger Woods with a Congressional Gold Medal. Democratic Rep. Joe Baca introduced legislation in March that called for the golfer to be recognized for promoting good sportsmanship and breaking down barriers in golf. Baca says that "in light of the recent developments surrounding Tiger Woods and his family," he won't pursue legislation this session to give him the award.

Helmand **Football night in Afghanistan**

KEVIN FRAYER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

United States marines react while playing a game of mud football yesterday following a rain storm at their base in Khan Neshin, in the volatile Helmand province of southern Afghanistan.

Rural kids caught in middle

INDIA Indian children are increasingly caught in the middle of fighting between the government and communist rebels in impoverished rural areas, with at least 42 schools attacked in the past year, a human rights group said yesterday.

The rebels, who say they are inspired by Chinese revolutionary leader Mao Zedong, have been fighting for more than four decades in several states in central India, demanding land and jobs for agricultural labourers and the poor. But a spate of recent attacks has raised concern they are lashing out ahead of a planned government offensive aimed at routing them from their forest strongholds. While the rebels frequently target police and government workers, schools are also often destroyed by rebels or occupied by police, jeopardizing the education of tens of thousands of India's most disadvantaged and marginalized children, New York-based Human Rights Watch said in a report.

"The Maoists say they are fighting for India's poor, but their attacks on schools deprive these children of the education they desperately need," said Bede Sheppard, author of the report.

"At the same time, long-term police occupation of schools puts these children right in the midst of danger and trauma, keeps them from their classrooms, and frightens them away."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Settlers protest construction freeze

JERUSALEM About 10,000 Jewish settlers and backers staged a protest in downtown Jerusalem last night in what they said would be the largest show of resistance to the government's freeze on new housing construction in the West Bank.

The protesters gathered outside the residence of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

The relatively large turnout on a rainy night reflected support for increasingly fierce settler resistance to the government building ban. Settlers held signs and banners that read, "We will continue to build" and "Stop Iran's nukes, not our homes." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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AOL could be in trouble for years: Analysts
AOL Inc. may report declining profit for years after its spinoff from Time Warner Inc. today, said analysts at Barclays Capital Inc. and RBC Capital Markets. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Business

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EDITOR: FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Shoppers play chicken

Survey finds many expect retailers to cut holiday prices even further

The annual game of chicken has begun.

Consumers are waiting to see how long retailers can hold out before slashing prices even further as the Christmas deadline looms.

With just 15 days left to shop, half of Canadians are only halfway through their holiday lists, a survey by Maritz Research Canada shows.

That's a higher number of people who are delaying their purchases than last year, said managing director Rob Daniel.

It'll be worth the wait, other experts said.

TONY BOCK/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE PHOTO

Wal-Mart is the top holiday shopping destination for Canadians, followed by Zellers and Canadian Tire, a survey found.

"There's going to be a little game of chicken with the consumer," said Willy Kruh, national partner with KPMG. "Consumers already saw prices being discounted early … they're going to wait."

Shoppers are planning to spend $570 on gifts on average, the same amount as last year, the survey found.

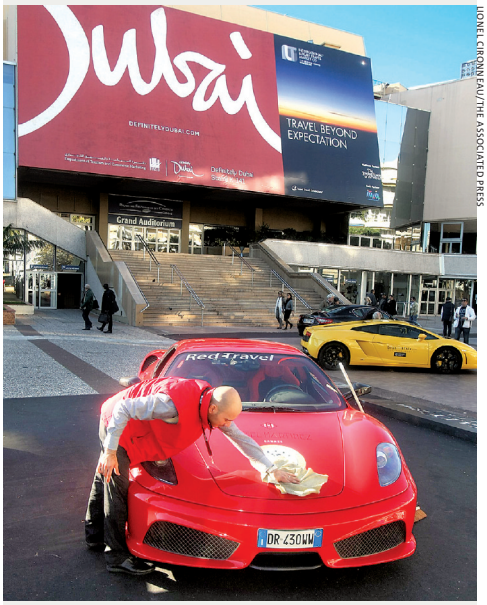
And they're again favouring stores that advertise low prices.

Wal-Mart Canada is the top holiday shopping destination for the third year in a row, with 65 per cent of consumers indicating they plan to shop there,

Zellers and Canadian Tire, were second, tied at 43 per cent each, the survey found.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Cannes Here's a car with polish



LIONEL CHIRONNEAU/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A man polishes a Ferrari at the International Luxury Travel Market exhibition yesterday in front of the Cannes Festival palace in Cannes, France. The ILTM 2009 is the leading annual business-to-business event for the global luxury travel community, bringing together more than 3,600 suppliers and personally invited professional luxury travel buyers.

Civic, Escalade a real steal for Canada's auto thieves

AUTO The Honda Civic has again wheeled into the top spot on a list of most frequently stolen vehicles.

But the number of high-end models being snatched is a sign of growing appetite among thieves for luxury rides, says the Insurance Bureau of Canada.

Rick Dubin, the bureau's vice-president of investigations, says they've seen the two-door, 2000 Civic SiR atop the list before.

The 1999 model of the vehicle came in third this year.

"There's lots of them on the road, probably a demand for parts," he said.

"Also they can be modified … so they've been souped up."

The 2006 Hummer H2 four-door and four different four-door makes of the Cadillac Escalade are in the top 10. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Theft at ports

- Rick Dubin said the Insurance Bureau is seeing "an awful lot" of high-end vehicles being seized at ports in Montreal and Halifax. He said such thefts signal the involvement of organized crime.

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Four Patriots miss practice

Wide receiver Randy Moss and three linebackers were not at the New England Patriots practice yesterday. Coach Bill Belichick declined to comment on their absence. According to the Providence Journal's website, Moss and linebackers Adalius Thomas, Gary Guyton and Derrick Burgess showed up late to an 8 a.m. team meeting and were sent home. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sports

Owens signs modelling deal

The catwalk might never be the same now that Terrell Owens, left, has signed a deal with a modelling agency. Having already launched a reality TV show and promoted his own breakfast cereal, the Buffalo Bills receiver is ready to try fashion after signing a deal with Wilhelmina Models this week. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EDITOR: DON.MCHOULL@METRONEWS.CA

Magazine's Woods cover comes at awkward time

It's like missing a three-foot putt on the 72nd hole with a one-shot lead.

The timing couldn't be worse.

Golf Digest, the premier magazine about the game, features a photo illustration of Tiger Woods and U.S. President Barack Obama on the cover of the January issue.

The magazine, which began landing in subscribers' mailboxes earlier this week, was printed in mid-November, well before the world's best player crashed his Cadillac Escalade outside his Florida mansion, touching off a sex scandal involving a long list of alleged infidelities.

"We're a monthly magazine with monthly deadlines," spokesperson Bret Hopman responded in an email yesterday. "The January issue went to press almost two weeks before Tiger's accident."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Howard still perfect

With just one day of round-robin play left at the Canadian Olympic curling trials, Glenn Howard of Coldwater, Ont., is still the man to beat.

"I think we're getting a little bit better every game and I have to say the ice has never been better." Glenn Howard

A draw to the four-foot in an extra end kept Howard's perfect record intact yesterday as he scored a single point to beat Edmonton's Kevin Koe 7-6.

Howard (5-0) is alone in first place with two games remaining.

"One more down," said Howard. "5-0 is absolutely surreal right now.

"It's just where we want to be but we're playing well and I think we're getting a little bit better every game and I have to say the ice has never been better."

Koe, who entered the game with a 3-1 record, forced an extra end by scoring two points in the 10th.

There are few automatics in curling but giving Howard an easy draw with the game on the line is one of them.

Co-favourite Kevin Martin rolled to his third straight win, pounding long-time rival Randy Ferbey 9-5 in a much anticipated matchup of Edmonton teams.

Martin, now alone in second place at 4-1, jumped out to a 3-0 lead in the second end and cruised from there.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bernard remains atop leaderboard

Cheryl Bernard remains undefeated at the Canadian Olympic curling trials.

She beat 2006 Olympic bronze medallist Shannon Kleibrink 8-5 yesterday, scoring three in the 10th end to win the showdown between Calgary rinks.

Bernard tops the leaderboard at 5-0, while Kleibrink, Krista McCarville of Thunder Bay, Ont., and Saskatoon's Stefanie Lawton are tied at 3-2.

McCarville beat Kelowna's Kelly Scott 9-5 in another morning match.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Olli nets winner against Thrashers

NHL

Thrashers 1 Flames 3

AT

Olli Jokinen scored the eventual winner and Miikka Kiprusoff kept up his red-hot play with 24 saves as the Calgary Flames won 3-1 over the Atlanta Thrashers last night.

Jarome Iginla had a pair of assists while Nigel Dawes and Rene Bourque, into an empty net, also scored for Calgary (19-8-3).

With a 2-0 lead on second-period goals by Dawes and Jokinen, Calgary looked in control until Atlanta ended Kiprusoff's shutout bid at 12:27 of the third drawing within one on a goal by Colby Armstrong.

Rich Peverley flung the puck towards the net and Armstrong had the rebound glance in off his skate as he battled in front with Flames defenceman Aaron Johnson.

However, Kiprusoff, as he's done much of the past three weeks, shut the door the rest of the way.

Since giving up six goals and getting pulled after 40 minutes in a 7-1 home ice loss to Chicago on Nov. 19, Kiprusoff has been the NHL's hottest goalie.

In nine starts since that rocky outing, Kiprusoff's gone 6-2-1, posted three shutouts, and allowed only 11 goals — good for a 1.22 goals-against average and stingy .957 save percentage

THE CANADIAN PRESS

JEFF MCINTOSH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Atlanta Thrashers goalie Johan Hedberg looks back as Calgary Flame Olli Jokinen scores during the second period last night in Calgary. The Flames won 3-1.

Sports in brief

NHL The NHL has suspended Phoenix Coyotes defenceman Ed Jovanovski two games for a forearm to the head of Minnesota Wild centre Andrew Ebbett. METRO NEWS SERVICES

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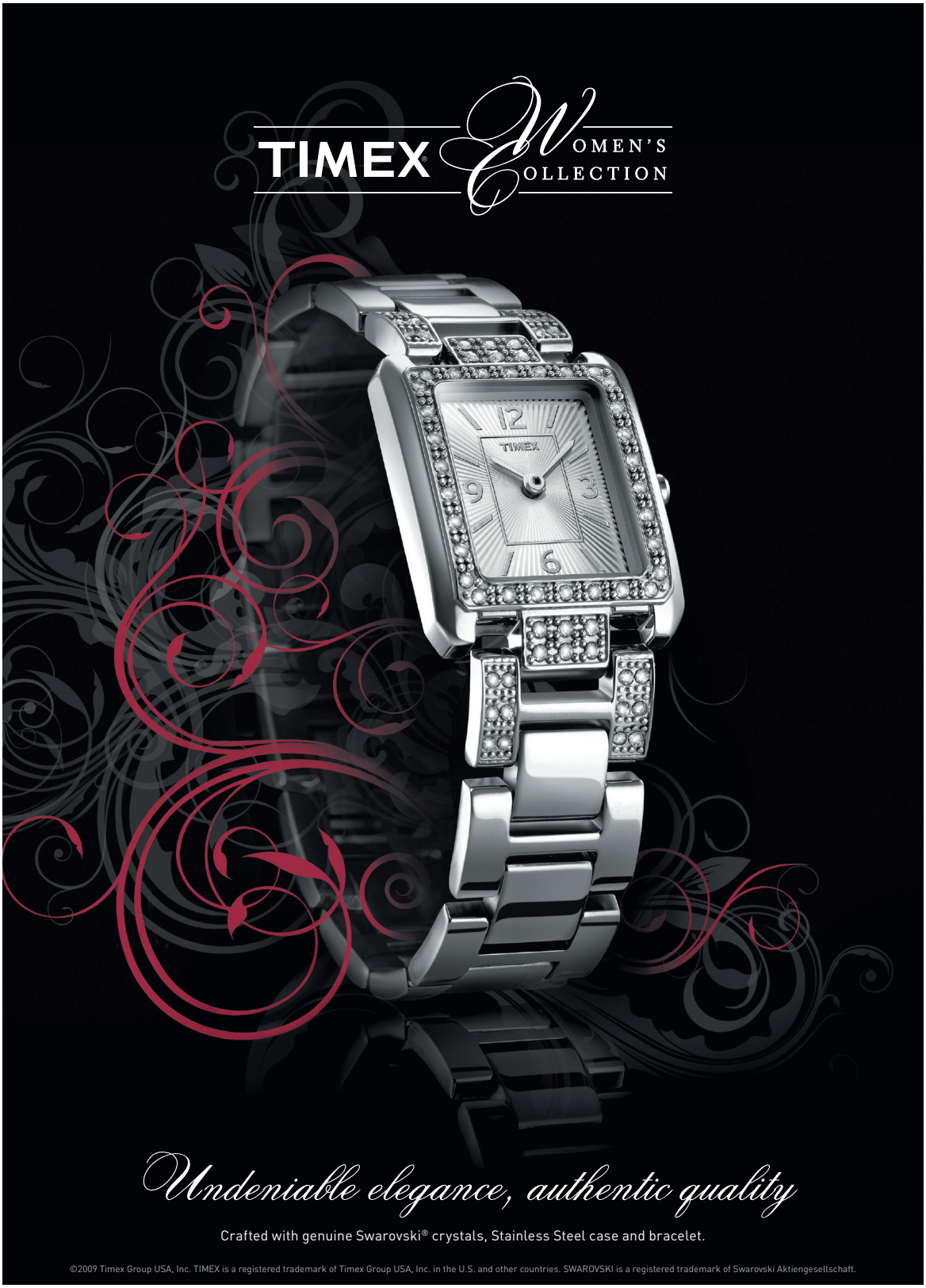

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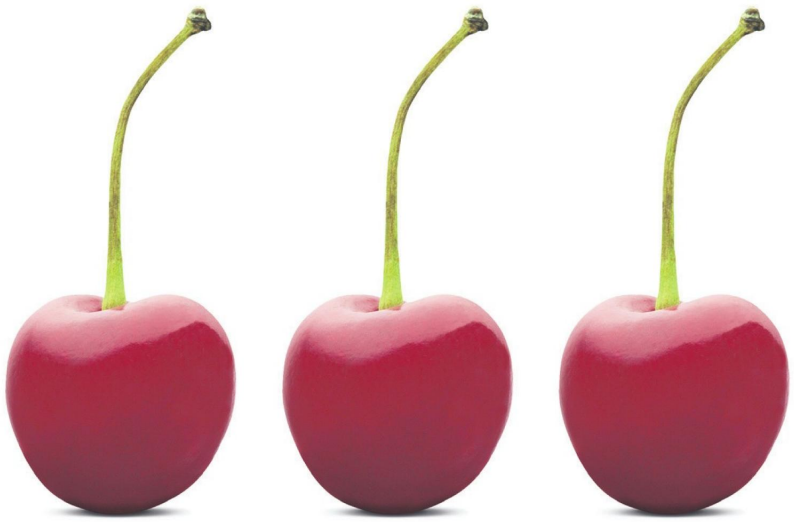

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Show your pride
This Striped Stocking Hat for kids features Miga embroidered on the front, a pom pom and a woven patch with the Vancouver 2010 emblem. For more details or to order online, go to elevatesport.ca. METRO NEWS SERVICES

HOLIDAY

Shopping Guide

EDITOR: STEPHANIE.BOMBA@METRONEWS.CA

A Blu-Ray Christmas

From players to what to watch, Metro has you covered

RAFAEL BRUSILOW
for Metro Canada

The Panasonic DMP-BD60 Blu-Ray player, below left, and the Panasonic SC-BTX70 Blu-Ray Cinema home theatre, right.

Nothing completes the perfect holiday break like sitting inside your warm living room with the family and watching your favourite movies and videos.

As the snow (hopefully!) falls during your Christmas break, here are a few options to help you get the most out of your viewing experience:

Toshiba BDX2000 Blu-Ray player
$249

Toshiba's first Blu-Ray disc player is a clean, uncluttered design that provides full 1080p Blu-Ray playback, upconversion for regular DVDs so you don't need to dump your large DVD library, and Blu-Ray specific goodies like BonusView (which lets you run things like director's commentaries in a picture-in-picture box while you watch) and BD-Live, which lets you use an Internet connection to download short features and trailers or play online games. Best of all, the price is solid.

Panasonic DMP-BD60 Blu-Ray player
$299

Another solid player at a good price point, Panasonic's value entry into the Blu-Ray player market does all the requisite 1080p/upconversion/BonusView and BD-Live stuff, but it also adds Viera Link and Viera Cast, which allow linking to PVR-type devices for recording your programs and streaming Internet goodies like YouTube directly to your TV. The player also has built-in reduced power-consumption features like auto power stand-by and is Energy Star qualified.

LG BD390C Blu-Ray player
$429.99

A bit pricier but well worth the cost if you like streaming stuff like YouTube movies onto your TV without needing your computer, LG's upper-scale Blu-Ray player is a very popular system that kicks a lot of butt. Of course it has 1080p Blu-Ray playback and upconverting for DVDs, high-definition video and sound with Dolby TrueHD and Dolby Digital, but it also features an external playback connection for external hard drives, 1 gigabyte of internal memory for recording onto BD-Live without needing an external memory card, and quick-booting and loading in under 20 seconds. The player's integrated Wi-Fi capabilities let you connect your TV to an Internet connection for easy streaming of online video and pictures as well.

Panasonic SC-BTX70 Blu-Ray Cinema home theatre
$1,299.99

If you want to go whole hog and really upgrade your entire home theatre setup, you would be hard-pressed to find a more complete player-plus-sound-system option for the price than Panasonic's SC-BTX70 Blu-Ray kit. With 375 watts of audio output, built-in Dolby TrueHD and Digital Plus high-clarity sound, whisper mode surround sound and a Dolby Virtual Speaker, this thing really kills on the sound side. It also has 1080p playback for Blu-Ray with ultra-upconverting for DVDs in the form of PHD, which processes each pixel individually, giving it all the necessary video power to make your TV a real centrepiece of your entertainment plans. Best of all, the system includes a universal iPod dock and SD card slot, making it even easier to watch what those digital movies you're already carrying around with you. Big sound and powerful visuals from a surprisingly compact package; if you've got the cash to spare, you won't be disappointed.

What to watch

Duplicity
$46.99 on Blu-Ray

Featuring stellar performances from Clive Owen and Julia Roberts, Duplicity is a fun, flirty spy flick that may not be the greatest Oscar contender of the year, but is still a great view. Take bets mid-movie on who's playing who and let the winner drink all the leftover eggnog.

Public Enemies
$41.99 on Blu-Ray

Another strong Johnny Depp vehicle, the film is a surprisingly poignant Depression-era gangster romp that has great action and captures the look and feel of the 1930s well. If you love Johnny — and who doesn't? — give it a go.

Battlestar Galactica Complete Series
$172.50 on DVD, $379.99 on Blu-Ray

An amazing show that garnered mainstream and true sci-fi viewers alike, Battlestar Galactica is a keeper and this ultimate 25-disc box set is the mother of all boxed sets. Presented in Dolby Digital 5.1 Surround Sound and presented in its own snazzy display box, the set is a whole load of sci-fi awesomeness.

Scent of a woman
These Lucia soaps, $10 each, are made in Canada. Available in Pomegranate-Red Currant and Goat Milk-Linseed Flower. At Indigo and Chapters stores across the country. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Holiday Shopping Guide

Gifts for the film buff

This G.I. Joe A Real American Hero: Complete Collectors Set comes in a toolbox with a lot of extras, including a G.I. dog tag flash drive.

PETER HOWELL
for Metro Canada

DVDs were designed to make the home movie-watching experience more convenient, by miniaturizing the film and the packaging.

But at this time of the year, they go in the opposite direction, losing all sense of proportion in the quest to separate movie lovers from their money.

Studios and distributors roll out the big boxes of films and artists they deem most gift-worthy, and there's no limit to their size or imagination.

Here's a selection of some of the more interesting sets, with suggestions as to whom might most like to find them under the Christmas tree.

Prices quoted may vary, so shop around for sales.

For the true film aficionado

AK 100: 25 Films by Akira Kurosawa, $364

There's almost no part of arthouse or mainstream moviegoing that Japan's Akira Kurosawa hasn't influenced: The Hidden Fortress became George Lucas' template for Star Wars; Seven Samurai started as a western tribute and turned into a much-copied icon; and Rashomon changed narrative cinema forever with its multiple-viewer approach to a crime story. Kurosawa is considered by many critics to be the greatest director who ever lived, and this magnificent Criterion set celebrates what would have been his 100th birthday. It features 25 of the films he made over his 50-year career (including four previously unavailable on DVD) plus a hardcover book of photos, descriptions and commentaries.

AK 100: 25 Films by Akira Kurosawa includes a hardcover book of photos. The Gone With the Wind: Ultimate Collector's Edition Blu-Ray, above right, includes recreations of theatre posters.

For the romantic & the restless

Gone With the Wind: Ultimate Collector's Edition Blu-Ray, $62

Franky, my dear, if you're a fan of this Civil War love saga, 70 years old this year, you probably already own at least one copy on VHS or DVD. But if you're looking to get into Blu-Ray, here's your reason. The restored print is pristine, and comes with a host of extras, including recreations of theatre posters and pamphlets, and a wealth of historical info on the making of this undisputed classic.

For the gritty realist

Samuel Fuller Film Collection, $68

Under-appreciated in his lifetime, yet gaining belated kudos thanks to Quentin Tarantino, Martin Scorsese and other admirers, Samuel Fuller approached everything from drama to comedy at full-bore and without fear. This set collects seven films the former crime reporter directed or wrote for Columbia Pictures, including Shockproof and Underworld U.S.A.

For gung-ho regular joes

G.I. Joe A Real American Hero: Complete Collectors Set, $126

If you didn't get enough Joe from last summer's live-action movie adaptation, reload with this complete set of the cartoon series that started it all. Comes in a toolbox with a boatload of extras, including a G.I. dog tag flash drive.

For the light-hearted & the clumsy

National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation 20th Anniversary Collector's Edition, $42

If you're going to make a fool of yourself at Christmas, you might as well do it in style. This comedy favourite, featuring Chevy Chase's popular doofus Clark Griswold as a Yule Fool, celebrates its 20th anniversary with a Blu-Ray upgrade in a metal-can gift set that includes instant snow powder and drink coasters.

For the feel-good fanatic

Forrest Gump: 15th Anniversary Chocolate Box Gift Set, $27

Life is like a box of chocolates and so is this bizarre gift set, which bundles the inspirational Tom Hanks starrer and Oscar winner inside a cavity-free candy container — would you believe the chocs are just scratch-and-sniff cardboard? But the set is loaded with featurettes and other extras that will make fans want to run with Forrest.

For the wild & not-so-innocent

Quentin Tarantino Collection, $40

Aw-right! The first six films from America's favourite former video stork clerk, from Reservoir Dogs to Pulp Fiction to Deathproof. Six-disc set come with a photo book and mini Kill Bill plastic samurai sword and stand.

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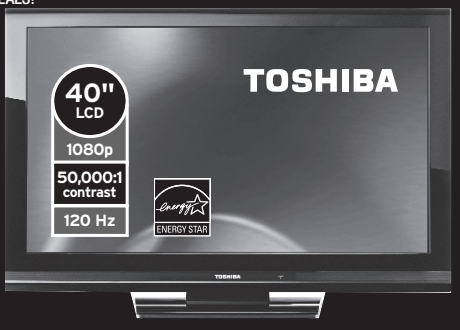

NE122G609 © 2009. Sears Canada Inc.

All about Mickey

It Was All Started By A Mouse, $29.99 at Hallmark. Turn the crank to see a short animated scene featuring Mickey Mouse. For more, go to hallmark.ca. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Holiday Shopping Guide

Light up your Hanukkah

Hanukkah is a joyful holiday that comes with its own rituals, foods, games, songs and stories.

That makes it easy to throw a party, especially since the traditions can be enjoyed by guests of all ages and backgrounds.

Everyone loves yummy latkes and the sight of those beautiful menorah candles lighting up a dark winter night. But the parties are not only a way for Jewish families to share their heritage; they're also a way to connect with friends and neighbours. Here are some ideas for creating the perfect Hanukkah party.

Hanukkah begins Friday

Latkes

You can't have Hanukkah without latkes. These are pancakes made from shredded potatoes, onions and eggs, with a little salt and flour mixed in, then fried golden brown and served with applesauce and sour cream. You can buy them frozen and heat them up to ease your burdens as hostess, but making them from scratch is part of the fun.

Other Food

Fried food is traditional for Hanukkah, so try ready-made chicken wings.

Treats

Traditional sweets include jelly doughnuts (called sufganiyot) and chocolate coins covered in metal foil (called gelt). Put a bowl of chocolate gelt on the table, or hand out party bags with a dreidel and some chocolate coins in each.

Dreidels

To play dreidel, small wooden or plastic dreidels are best. You'll also need pennies, 10 for each player and more for a communal pot. If you don't have enough pennies, use dried beans, wrapped chocolate gelt or even poker chips.

Each side of the dreidel bears a different Hebrew letter. The letter facing up when the top stops spinning determines what happens in the game. Make a chart for the rules so everyone can follow.

Crafts, songs and stories

Set up a table for art activities for younger kids. Judaica stores and websites offer all sorts of Hanukkah-themed colouring books, stickers, dreidels to decorate and other projects.

LARRY CROWE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Latkes are a traditional Hanukkah food.

Candles

Menorahs are lit at sundown. Make sure you have enough candles and set the menorahs in a spot where they won't pose a fire danger.

Many of your guests won't know how to sing the prayers, but all you need is a few strong voices to lead. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Zhu Zhu Pets riding the wave of holiday success

When Lori Fowlkes first saw robotic Zhu Zhu Pets toy hamsters in September, she remembers her kids started jumping up and down and saying "Please! Please! Can we buy them?"

Seeing a fully stocked shelf, she decided to hold off until Christmas.

That was "before I knew that the hamsters would soon be off the shelves and more scarce than an H1N1 vaccine," said Fowlkes, 32.

Now she can't find them anywhere.

Zhu Zhu Pets, which retail for about $10, are this year's bona fide must-have toy, following in the footsteps of past crazes for **Tickle Me Elmo** and **Cabbage Patch Kids**. On resale websites like eBay and Craigslist, they fetch $40 or more. Vital accessories such as the hamster car and funhouse are sold separately. By many counts, the toy is an unlikely hit.

Zhu Zhu Pets retail for about $10 and have quickly become this year's must have Christmas gift. Retailers are scratching their heads at how it happened while parents are getting creative in the hunt.

They're in a field crowded with toy pets. The hamsters, which scurry around, make noises and drive cars, don't always work the way you expect and have a limited range of action.

"Honestly, I don't really get it," said BMO Capital Markets analyst Gerrick Johnson. "But I don't need to get it for a toy to be hot."

They have one big thing going for them in tough economic times: They're cheap, Johnson said

"The last couple of years the robotic pet has been very popular, but those have been very expensive," like Hasbro's $250 robotic dinosaur **Kota the Triceratops**, he said. "But here's a version of a robotic pet that only costs $10."

Zhu Zhu Pets, aimed at three- to 10-year-olds, have rushed in to fill the void. But unlike past "It" toys made by large manufacturers like Mattel's **Tickle Me Elmo** and **Tiger Electronic's Furby**, **Zhu Zhu Pets** are made by tiny Cepia Inc. of St. Louis, with just 16 employees in the U.S. and 30 in China, making their success even more unlikely.

Creation of a craze

Just six years old, Cepia previously worked on an electronic dispensing device for consumer products before turning to toys and its only other product, a line of light-up bears called **Glo-E Bears**.

The company was started by toy industry vet Russ Hornsby, 56.

The success of **Zhu Zhu Pets** wasn't entirely accidental. The company got the word out with a savvy mix of local cable ads and parties thrown by "mommy bloggers."

Hornsby said he was hoping to sell three to four pets per store per week, but was secretly hoping for eight. The result, Hornsby said, was exponentially higher, though he wouldn't say how much.

"The rate was so astonishing everybody had to go back and pinch themselves," Hornsby said. Toys "R" Us pulled all of the test data to make sure it wasn't being manipulated, Hornsby said.

Keeping up with demand

For parents, the hamster hunt is intense. A Facebook fan site tracks parent's search for the toys. Hornsby said he got a call at on his cellphone from a mom asking for hamsters.

"They're calling because they're upset and they feel we're not doing a good enough job getting merchandise on the shelves," Hornsby said.

But with retailers being extra cautious with orders this year following the dismal holiday season last year, the maker has had to scramble to make enough to catch up to demand.

Toy analyst Jim Silver at Timetoplaymag.com said it was late fall by the time Cepia and retailers realized how popular the toys were, and by that time it was difficult to increase production.

"You can't just go to China and flip a switch," he said. But in the past three months, the company has added three more factories in China.

"Retailers are airlifting in millions of products," Hornsby said.

Hornsby estimates the company will sell $100 million in Zhu Zhu Pets by the end of the year.

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Stocking stuffer
Keep them warm with these children's pom-pom slippers, $6, by Joe Fresh Style. For more, go to joe.ca. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Holiday Shopping Guide

Fun and games

1 **Cranium Wow,** $29.99. Available at all major retailers, including Walmart, Toys R Us and Zellers.

2 **Candy Land: Sweet Celebration,** $24.99, for ages four and up. Available at mass merchandise retailers.

3 **Martian Matter Alien Maker,** $24.99, lets you to build more than 90 different alien combinations; hasbro.com.

4 **Easy-Bake Oven & Snack Centre,** $34.99, and **Easy-Bake Decorating Sensation Frosting Pen,** $19.99; hasbro.com.

5 **CLUE: Secrets & Spies edition,** $29.99, features optional text messaging. For more, go to hasbro.com.

6 **Operation,** $19.99, at all major retailers, including Walmart, Toys R Us and Zellers. For more, go to hasbro.com.

7 **Beatles Trivial Pursuit,** $39.95 at Indigo and Chapters stores. For more, go to chapters.indigo.ca.

8 **The Game of Life: Extreme Reality,** $29.99. Available at all major retailers, including Walmart, Toys R Us and Zellers.

9 **Tamagotchi disco lights,** $16.99. Available at Walmart, Toys R Us, Zellers and Loblaws. Go to bandai.com for more.

10 **Portable toy detective set,** $16.99 at Winners. For more, call 1-877-946-6877 or visit winners.ca.

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The 12 spirits of Christmas

PETER ROCKWELL
for Metro Canada

Selecting the perfect liquid for those solids in your life can be a challenge; so here are my choice picks for every one of those beverage lovers in your life:

Best bets under $25

1 Wychwood Brewery Bah Humbug Christmas Ale, $3.45-$3.99*

Ebenezer Scrooge's face peering out from a beer label might scare the Dickens out of some, but this malty English brew will have the ale aficionados on your list drinking merry.

2 Faxe Premium Gift Pack, $9.85-$9.95

If you're going to gift just one beer this year, why not make it a big one? This crisp litre of lager is a food-friendly thirst-quencher that comes with its own mega mug.

3 Freixenet Cordon Rosado Brut, $12.95-$15.99

The bubbly berry goodness of this Spanish rosé will appeal to any wine lover. Perfect with food, it's a match made in brunch, lunch and dinner heaven.

4 Moselland 2008 Ars Vitis Riesling, $9.95-$17.99

Forget what it looks like in the glass, this refreshing, off-dry German white is a knockout while still in the bottle. The winter scene has a limited run; looking as good as the wine tastes.

Best bets under $50

5 Absolut Celebration Vodka, $25.95-$27.49

OK, so vodka can make for a pretty neutral gift. Wrapping it in a cool blue plastic casing (that throws a bit of a disco vibe) is something to celebrate. Absolut switches up the look each year so this one's for the collectors.

6 Sailor Jerry's Spiced Navy Rum, $26.95-$29

What's eggnog's best friend? Why an ounce or two of rum, spiced rum, of course. Sailor Jerry was a tattooist (hence the label) and his spicy spirited namesake takes mixed drinks to the next level.

7 Chambord Liqueur, $36.99-$45.95

When it comes to fruit liqueurs, the ripe black raspberry intensity of Chambord (named for the French Château) can't be beat. It looks fine and tastes even better — especially when a few drops are added to white or sparkling wine.

8 Taylor Fladgate 10 Year Old Tawny Port, $34.95-$39.81

Port is the classic seasonal sipper with this full-figured style made from a blend of vintages no less than a decade old. Roaring fire not included.

Splurges $50+

9 Glenora Distillery Glen Breton Rare Single Malt Canadian Whisky, $74.95-$89.55

Though scotch connoisseurs may pooh-pooh mainstream Canadian whisky, this Nova Scotian is the only single malt version made in North America and upstages its novelty with a great mouth-feel.

10 Patron Silver Tequila, $74.99-$89.99

High-end tequila is as mixable and shootable as the cheaper stuff — it just tastes a lot better. Co-owned by Dan Aykroyd, a bottle of white Patron will bring a smile to the face any spirit (or Ghostbuster) fan.

11 Bollinger Special Cuvée Champagne, $79.95-$82.92

For the 007 buff on your list, nothing will put the sparkle in their glass like a bottle of Bollinger. Rich and sophisticated, the Champagne maker has been Bond's on-screen choice since the days of Pierce Brosnan.

12 Remy Martin Louis XIII Cognac, $1,870-$2,400

There isn't a drop of booze inside this über-premium Backarack Crystal bottle under the age of 50 — making it the dream dram for cognac lovers and pretty good over ice with a splash of Coke.

Peter Rockwell is Metro's wine columnist. Check out his Liquid Assets column on Tuesdays or online at metronews.ca/liquidassets.

Offer subject to change without notice. *LG Eve available with new activation on any 3-yr. term voice and data plan. Other devices featured available with new activation on any 3-yr. term voice and data plan having min. combined monthly service fee of $45.
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For the handyman

This Black & Decker Air Station, $99.99, gives you the power to use the inflator where and when you need it. Works on tires, rafts and more. At Canadian Tire, canadiantire.ca. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Holiday Shopping Guide

O Christmas tree

Painted metal caribou ornaments, $3.99 at HomeSense. For more, go to homesense.ca.

The Swedish Chef ornament from the TV series The Muppet Show, $242.98 at Hallmark. Press a button to hear moments from the show. For more, go to hallmark.ca.

Bullion owl ornament, $4.99 at HomeSense. For more, go to homesense.ca.

Lollipop ornament, $8.95 at Pier 1 Imports. For more, go to pier1.ca.

Holiday Perks, $16.98 at Hallmark. For more, go to hallmark.ca.

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Sunday 11 to 4

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Thursday and Friday 10 to 8
Saturday 10 to 5:30
December 14 to 23
Monday to Friday 10 to 8
Saturday 10 to 5:30
December 24 10 to 3

www.TenThousandVillages.ca

Stocking stuffer
From... With Love, $59.95, is comes in a Russian-designed hatbox and includes Snow Fairy body wash. Available at LUSH, 1-866-644-5874, lush.ca. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Life of the party

Dessert shooters, $14.99 for a pack of eight. Flavours include praline and raspberry with white chocolate and cocoa. Available at Metro, metro.ca.

Green & Black's Organic Seasonal Edition Miniature Bar Collection, $22.59. For more, go to greenandblacks.com.

Indigolife Festive Crackers, $15.99 for a pack of 10, at Indigo stores across Canada.

European Hot Chocolate Pot, $39.99, at Indigo and Chapters stores across Canada.

Cadbury Hot Chocolate Drink Maker, $59.95. Available at Walmart, Kitchen Stuff Plus, Blockbuster, Stokes, Giant Tiger, and other select retailers across Canada. Go to canada.cadbury.com for more.

PC Truffles dusted with cocoa powder, $5, and **PC Chocolate Covered Gingerbread Bites**, $6. For more, go to pc.ca.

Irresistibles European Biscuits, $9.99, at Metro. For more, go to metro.ca.

Six-slice waffle maker, $114.99, by Cusinart. Available at Home Outfitters. Go to homeoutfitters.com for more.

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Holiday Shopping Guide

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Gratitude wrap, $128, at Lululemon. It's made with french terry light, and has hidden thumbholes to keep sleeves in place. For more, go to lululemon.com.

Multi-stripe wrap cardigan, $45.90 at Dynamite. For more, go to dynamite.ca.

Brooks Vapor Dry 3D for women, $95. For more, go to brooksrunning.ca.

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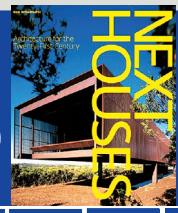

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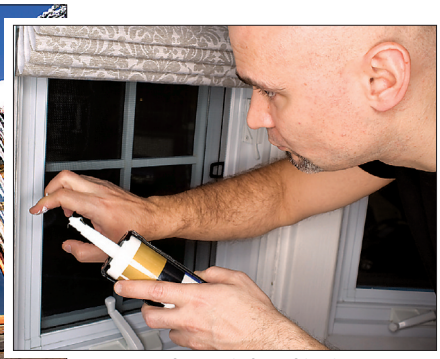
Never too late to batten the hatches

'Winterizing' your home is a vital step for both comfort and your pocketbook

BRIAN COULTON
for Metro Canada



Be sure to seal your windows this winter.

Old Man Winter doesn't like your house.

It's not you. It's him. With his combination of freezing temperatures, roaring winds and heaps of snow, how can the guy resist inching his way into every window crack, flooding unprotected nooks, and picking apart a structure so inferior to his climatic wrath?

But don't worry just yet; it's not too late to restore your blizzardy bond. Merv McBride, owner of home improvement chain Handyman Connection says by taking a few, economical steps to winterize your home, you can ward off damage and save money on home heating bills.

"When winterizing your home, you're really thinking about three things: Energy conservation and how to save money, how to preserve air quality and how to avoid any damage to your home," he says.

The greatest instance of damage for homes in locations that experience freeze-thaw cycles — like Southern Ontario and the West Coast — is the formation of ice-dams, says McBride. That's when heat escapes through inadequate insulation in the attic, melting rooftop snow, damaging shingles and even leaking through the roof.

To prevent ice-dams, McBride suggests installing fresh batt or blow-in insulation. While it can get pricey, he says, "It's probably small in comparison to the money you're losing with the heat going through the ceiling, especially if you're in a very cold climate."

"If it's a crack in the frame, caulking is the way to go to seal that hole. If it's a loose window in the frame, your only choice is to put weather stripping in there."
Merv McBride, owner of home improvement chain Handyman Connection on windows

Flooding can also result from clogged eaves troughs, which McBride suggests clearing out well before winter descends. "If that water can't get away, it ends up running over the edge of the eaves and down to the foundation of your home," he says, "The ground's frozen, the warmest part is near the house and if you get a lot of water built up against the foundation, it could escape into your home."

As a general tip for homeowners across Canada, McBride says checking for, and sealing cracks in windows and doors can reduce escaping heat and utility bills.

"If it's a crack in the frame, caulking is the way to go to seal that hole. If it's a loose window in the frame, your only choice is to put weather stripping in there." To make sure your sealing is successful, turn off the lights, look outside and if you see light, McBride says it means air is entering and the crevasse must be covered.

For grade-A air, McBride proposes having your furnace professionally checked each season and ensuring furnace filters are completely clean.

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Erick Cardoza
"Randomtype's Erick Cardoza is an excellent resource for supporting small- and medium-sized businesses with their online needs."

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Father Christmas, meet Mother Nature

Plastic ornaments, strands of electricity-hogging lights, trees chopped down by the millions: Christmas decorating isn't exactly known as environmentally friendly.

But, say design experts, there are plenty of ways to bring the sparkle and style of the season into your home without increasing your carbon footprint.

BRING THE OUTDOORS IN

Search outside, says Atlanta-based interior designer Mallory Mathison, for natural materials such as "leaves, branches, cones of all types and berries." She creates holiday centrepieces by filling bowls or baskets with fresh fruits and vegetables. With pine cones, "collect as many different types as possible. They need to be dry, so lay them out in the attic or garage." Try displaying them, she says, in large silver bowls, long trays or "a big, funky pottery bowl."

If you're buying a live Christmas tree, consider one that can be replanted after the holidays. Some are available in pots, others have their roots tied up loosely in fabric.

WHAT'S OLD IS NEW

"Everyone thinks eco-friendly means everything has to be made out of 'sustainable this' and 'sustainable that,'" Sabrina Soto, host of HGTV's Real Estate Intervention says. "But going to the thrift store is eco-friendly."

If you find mismatched, transparent Christmas balls at a thrift shop, Soto says you can make them work even if they don't quite fit your decor. Change their look by unscrewing the top, pouring in a few drops of eco-friendly paint and swirling it around. The colour will show through.

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Style

EDITOR: ANN-MARIE.COLACINO@METRONEWS.CA

Be a man: Wear a skirt

Runway trend goes mainstream at H&M

HIMANI EDIRIWEERA
for Metro Canada

The evolution of man continues on the runway as the man-skirt is officially introduced into the mainstream fashion lexicon as part of H&M's 2010 spring collection for men.

Designers started putting men in skirts and sending them down the runway but the world did not really take notice until high profile designer Marc Jacobs started appearing in one for shows and events a few seasons ago.

Social conditioning that skirts are for women are being challenged with designers like Prada, Yves Saint Laurent and Alexander McQueen unveiling long and short skirts, pleated skirts and kilts, for men.

After all, men have been wearing skirts as part of native attire for years — the Scottish kilt, the Greek foustanella, the dhoti and lungi in India, the sarong in Southeast Asia, and the lavalava in Samoa.

Western culture has long resisted the man-skirt, holding fears of it being branded as effeminate.

"Our spring collection has a strong global inspiration and many ethnic influences," said Karen Richter, showroom manager at H&M Canada. "Men wearing skirts is common in many other cultures around the world."

H&M shows the pleated skort with a graphic T-shirt, a tailored blazer, leggings and a tough boot.

Also, H&M is bringing back an old look. Drop-crotch pants, or harem pants, for the urban man — a look some might remember from the late '80s.

It's a trend that can be seen on men and women in Europe but North Americans can't seem to let go of MC Hammer and "…Can't Touch This," look.

Givenchy, Dior Homme, Phillip Lim, Giorgio Armani, Ralph Lauren and many others designers have re-introduced the drop-crotch silhouette.

H&M shows the harem pants with a bright T-shirt, graphic maxi scarf and a cotton spring jacket.

GETTY IMAGES

Left: Designer Marc Jacobs.

Left: H&M's men "skort," left ($59.95), hits stores mid-March at select stores.

*Offer applies to H&M stores in Canada only - for a limited time. The offer is not valid in conjunction with any other offer, discount or previously purchased merchandise.

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H&M

Team spirit tees

NHL fans can score an Old Navy hockey "jersey" with new limited edition two-in-one shirts for boys and girls. They feature teams such as the Toronto Maple Leafs, Ottawa Senators and more. Kids shirts are $18.50 and baby tees are $16.50. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Deciphering Mrs. O's style

New book examines first lady's fashion over the past year

KENYA HUNT
Metro World News

Mary Tomer, the woman behind the hugely popular website, Mrs. O (mrs-o.org), has released the book Mrs. O: The Face of Fashion Democracy, which examines Michelle Obama's personal style.

An advertising account planner by day, Tomer has spent her free time during the past 12 months tirelessly cataloguing the US first lady's outfits, which is no easy task. (Is that belt Azzedine Alaïa or J.Crew?) It involves a certain amount of detective work, including countless hours studying runway photos on Style.com and sending emails to fashion publicity firms.

As a result, Tomer's site has become a must-read for industry insiders, fashion lovers and Ms. Obama fans alike.

Here Tomer breaks down the method behind her website:

Mrs. O: The Face of Fashion Democracy by Mary Tomer is available at Chapters and Indigo stores across the country or online at chapters.indigo.ca for $31.99.

Sussing out Mrs. Obama's favourites: "When I was starting up the blog, I would religiously study the top collections of the season on Style.com. Early on, I became aware that Ikram Goldman was an influential force in Michelle Obama's wardrobe, so I particularly studied up on the designers carried in her Chicago boutique," she explains.

Canvassing the fashion brands: "There was one Mrs. O mystery look that I was determined to include in this book, but I had to identify the designer in order to do so. As I was doing research and interviews for the book, I would ask various PR people if their designer was responsible," she says. "Someone finally pointed me to Jonathan Saunders and I then confirmed with his PR team."

Building a helpful peanut gallery: "If I wasn't sure (of an outfit), I would throw out a few suggestions on the blog, and see what the site community thought. The site community has grown considerably, so even when I'm stuck, someone on the blog can weigh in to help me identify the designer."

First lady face-off

- Michelle Obama beat out Carla Bruni for the first spot in French Elle's annual "Political Chic" best-dressed list. The magazine gave the American First Lady credit for her adventurous style and her penchant for wearing younger, emerging designers such as Thakoon and Jason Wu. Meanwhile, Carla Bruni, who tends to stick with more established, iconic designers, came in at number two. KENYA HUNT/ METRO WORLD NEWS

Hepburn's chic wardrobe auctioned off in London

AUCTION Audrey Hepburn fans now have a chance to purchase dozens of garments and personal effects once belonging to the movie star in an auction that began this week in London.

A Givenchy cocktail dress and cropped jacket made from black lace — which Hepburn wore in the 1966 romantic comedy How to Steal a Million, co-starring Peter O'Toole — is expected to fetch the sale's highest price of between 15,000-20,000 pounds — though auctioneer Kerry Taylor acknowledges the estimates are very approximate. She said that clothes having once belonged to Hepburn, who died in 1993, rarely come to auction and the last two pieces fetched a whopping US$1 million.

"These are harder times, and I've tried to keep my feet on the ground," she said, adding that lots start at an estimated 250 pounds for a straw hat Another headpiece, a domed hat by Givenchy in green velvet with dangling beaded and feathered tassels, was featured in a 1964 Vogue shoot, and is estimated at 800-1,200 pounds.

FRANCOIS MORI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Audrey Hepburn's black lace Givenchy dress.

Most of the lots come from the closets of Tanja Star-Busmann, a longtime friend of the actress. The two met in London when Tanja was 15 years old and Hepburn 20 — just before her career took off.

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It's a boy for Bundchen and Brady

Gisele Bundchen has given birth to a healthy baby boy, according to People magazine, although she and Tom Brady did not release details on the birth or the name of the newborn. **METRO WORLD NEWS**

Entertainment

Extortion threat

John Stamos was the target of an alleged extortion attempt. Stamos says he was blackmailed for $680,000 US by a man and woman claiming they had threatening photos of the former Full House star. TVGUIDE.COM

EDITOR: DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

🌐🌐🌐🌐🌐 A CLASSIC; 🌐🌐🌐🌐 EXCELLENT; 🌐🌐🌐 GOOD; 🌐🌐 FAIR; 🌐 POOR

Sorry attempt to apologize

Chris Brown

Album: Graffiti
Label: Jive/Sony Music
Rating: 🌐

CHRIS BROWN SHOULD have waited a year before releasing a new record, as it's impossible not to listen to this and hear another half-hearted attempt to apologize for beating the pulp out of Rihanna, while making himself out to be the wounded boyfriend. Famous Girl is the most explicit song about his ex. And an offensive one at that. "You were the first to play games," "Keisha would have told me I was sent from heaven," "Some famous girls will break your heart" — classic blame the victim behaviour. Skip this disingenuous — and musically vapid — disc.

Bryan Borzykowski/for Metro Canada

Clipse

Album: Til The Casket Drops
Label: Re-Up/Columbia
Rating: 🌐🌐🌐🌐

IF MALICE AND Pusha T could sell records based on praise, they'd have bigger figures than both Jay-Z and Eminem. But after an oppressive record deal and the commercial disaster of 2006's brilliant Hell Hath No Fury, the Thornton brothers return with newfound relaxedness. It works both for and against them on their third album. Mixing it up with Cam'ron and Kanye, the bravado comes with an airy exhilaration, but joints with Pharrell and Keri Hilson cry for mainstream acceptance. Still, minus the signature coke-raps and hard knocks, it's still the Clipse, and they're still kinda like a big deal.

Cam Lindsay/for Metro Canada

Chris Brown makes a half-hearted attempt to apologize on Graffiti.

CharlotteGainsbourg

Album: IRM
Label: Because/Warner
Rating: 🌐🌐🌐🌐

THIS ALBUM SHOULD be co-credited to Beck, who wrote all of the music and co-wrote the lyrics. Named after the traumatic brain hemorrhage Charlotte suffered after a water-skiing accident, IRM is a collaboration that's as much the influence of her parents (Serge Gainsbourg and Jane Birkin) as it is Beck's recent string of studio quickies.

While it's their duet on Heaven Can Wait and the crank eccentricity of Greenwich Mean Tim that will attract his fans, it's the lush, seductive orchestrations peppered throughout and psychedelic sound collages like IRM and Trick Pony that make it her album and not just Beck's pet project.

Cam Lindsay/for Metro Canada

Neil Young

Album: Dreamin' Man
Label: Reprise/Warner
Rating: 🌐🌐🌐🌐

WINNIPEG-RAISED Neil Young can't do anything wrong, even when he releases his least exciting live album to date. Dreamin Man was recorded in 1992 and features every song off Harvest Moon. In terms of the singer-songwriters' live discs, it's not as thrilling as Live at Massey Hall or Live at the Fillmore East, but it's still damn good. It's just Young and his acoustic playing mellow renditions of the already low-key Harvest Moon. It's haunting and dramatic and his voice is in perfect shape. An excellent holiday gift for the Neil lover.

Bryan Borzykowski/for Metro Canada

30 Seconds To Mars

Album: This is War
Label: Virgin/EMI
Rating: 🌐🌐

IF ONLY ALL musicians were famous actors first. Unlike most bands, Jared Leto's 30 Seconds To Mars had a built-in audience when it formed, which has helped the group sell millions of records. Their music can't be the reason for the success — it's some of the most unimaginative work around. The group's latest is a messy collection of U2-like rock songs loaded with Leto's distorted howls and yells and uncoordinated guitars. It's also incredibly mundane. He's done one good things here — getting fans around the world to contribute sounds to the disc — but that's where the group's creativity ends.

Bryan Borzykowski/for Metro Canada

m.metronews.ca

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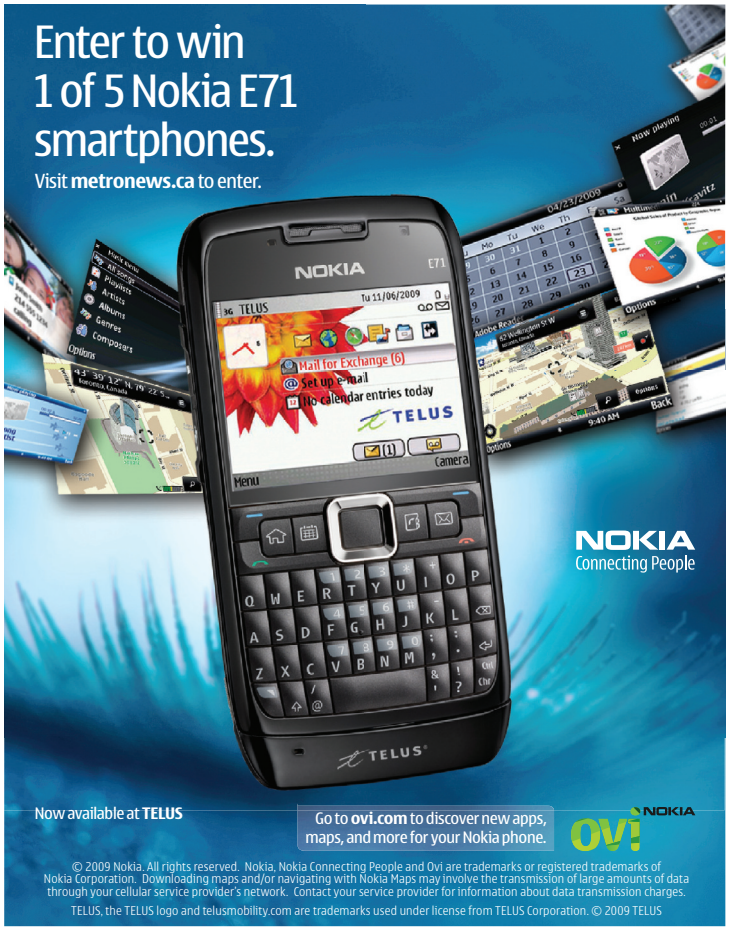

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metro

Jennifer to play Adam's Eve

Jennifer Aniston will play Adam Sandler's wife in a new movie. The actress is reportedly in negotiations to star opposite the actor in a romantic comedy, The Pretend Wife. Plot details are being kept firmly under wraps. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Old friends tackle post-apartheid

Nelson Mandela made it clear that Morgan Freeman was the man he would want to play him in a film.

When it came time to play Mandela in Invictus, Freeman told producing partner Lori McCreary that he had two men in mind to direct the film, which dramatizes Mandela's partnership with a South African rugby star (played by Matt Damon) to rally their post-apartheid countrymen behind the team's underdog quest for the 1995 World Cup.

"I said, 'I can only think of two. Clint Eastwood, and then there's Clint Eastwood.' He's the best director I know," Freeman says of the filmmaker who gave him a plum role in Unforgiven and an Academy Award-winning part in Million Dollar Baby.

Freeman's comment comes moments before Eastwood enters the room for a joint interview, amiable banter and wisecracks ensuing as the two longtime friends and colleagues talk about their third collaboration.

Informed of the compliment Freeman had just paid him as his only choice to direct Invictus, Eastwood shoots back: "That's very kind of him. He's obviously a man of very good taste and selectivity in life."

Freeman follows with a reminder that Eastwood had once "stood up in public with a microphone and called me the best actor in the world."

The exchange continues: Eastwood: "That was right after I told Matt that he was the best actor in the world."

Freeman: "Doesn't matter . . . You always go for the best."

Eastwood: "I do pride myself on that. I believe in surrounding myself with the very best people, and that cuts down the margin for error, and that covers my inadequacies."

Freeman: "And he says, he can stand back and let them do their thing, then take all the credit."

With Invictus, Freeman was the first man on board, sending the script Eastwood's way, hoping his friend would want to direct.

Freeman had been meeting with Mandela since the 1990's with the idea of adapting the jailed-activist-turned-president's memoir Long Walk to Freedom for the big-screen. Then journalist John Carlin told Freeman about his book, Playing the Enemy: Nelson Mandela and the Game That Made a Nation, recounting the new South African president's cheerleading that united whites and blacks behind the national rugby team.

The effort defined the healing spirit Mandela brought to the nation, Freeman says.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Unforgiven buddies Eastwood and Freeman back in the saddle for Invictus, which opens in theatres tomorrow.

Invictus opens in theatres tomorrow

Barker settles lawsuit over plane crash

LEGAL Former Blink-182 drummer Travis Barker has settled his lawsuit against several companies over a plane crash last year that killed four people, attorneys said Tuesday.

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In brief

IDOL'S VOTING QUESTIONED

Clay Aiken received a lot of votes as an American Idol contestant and eventual runner-up. Now, it's his lone vote that's drawing attention in North Carolina. The Wake County Board of Elections scheduled a meeting Wednesday to examine a complaint questioning Aiken's voter registration in the county.

DEATH Movie producer Tyler Perry says his mother, Willie Maxine Perry, has died. Tyler Perry announced the news of the Tuesday and thanked fans for their prayers.

DUKING IT OUT A charitable trust set up by The Dukes of Hazzard creator has filed a new $15 million federal lawsuit against Warner Bros., claiming the studio and its television production company shortchanged it on royalties stemming from the hit series.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kenya's Style

Kenya Hunt

Exclusively at metronews.ca/globalstyle

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CA	Vu	SC	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
12/10/09 primetime	267	351 - ACCESS	Alberta Primetime (Live)		(8:01) Private Practice		FlashForward (HDTV)		Fringe "Grey Matters"		Primetime
	243	317 3 CFCN	etalk	Off Air	The Mentalist (HDTV) (N)		The Vampire Diaries		CSI: Crime Scene Investigat'n		News
	-	- 4 OMNI	The Office	The Simpsons	Omni News: S. Asian Edition		Omni News: Cantonese Edition		Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Friends
	-	371 5 KXLY	4 News at 6	4 News at 6:30	Entertainment	The Insider (N)	FlashForward (HDTV)		Grey's Anatomy (HDTV)		Practice
	245	306 6 CBRT	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Steven and Chris (N)		The Border (N)		CBC News: The National		The Hour
	244	338 7 CICT	ET Canada	Entertainment	90210 (HDTV) (N)		Survivor: Samoa (N)		The Office (N)	The Office	News Final (N)
	246	- 8 CKAL	Law & Order: SVU		The Jay Leno Show (N)		Community (N)	Parks/Recreat	30 Rock	30 Rock	Your City
	119	705 9 CBXFT	Virginie (SC)	Gars fille	Les Années Derome (N) (SC)		3600 secondes d'extase (SC)		Le Téléjournal Nouvelles. (SC)		TJ Alberta
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	-	372 12 KREM	News	Hollywood	The Doctors (N)		Survivor: Samoa (N)		CSI: Crime Scene Investigat'n		The Mentalist
	-	374 14 KSPS	PBS NewsHour (N)		Unchartered Territory David Thompson-				MI-5 "Diana" (HDTV)		Soundstage
	502	390 15 CBC	CBC News: The National		The Nature of Things		CBC News: The National		CBC News: The National		Nature-Things
	-	370 16 KHQ	News	Be-Millionaire	Jeopardy! (N)	Wheel-Fortune	Community (N)	Parks/Recreat	The Office (N)	30 Rock	Jay Leno Show
	-	373 22 KAYU	The Office	Raymond	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Bones (HDTV PA) (N)		Fringe "Grey Matters"		News
	297	652 37 WPIX	Supernatural "The End"		PIX News at Ten Tong.		Two/Half Men	Friends	Friends	According-Jim	Family Guy
news	500	500 29 CNN	Larry King Live (N)		Anderson Cooper 360 (HDTV)				Larry King Live		Cooper 360
	508	502 31 CNN2	The Joy Behar Show		Nancy Grace		Showbiz Tonight		The Joy Behar Show		Nancy Grace
sports	400	400 21 TSN	(6) Curling 2009 Tim Hortons Roar of the Rings.				SportsCentre		World Poker Tour (Part 1 of 2)		Firefit Champ.
	408	418 27 net	(6) NFL Football Pittsburgh Steelers at Cleveland Browns. (HDTV) (Live)					Sportsnet Con.	Sportsnet Connected		MMA Conn
	410	403 30 SCORE	Canadian Poker Tour		Score Now		NBA Basketball Orlando Magic at Utah Jazz. (Live)				Score Now
	411	457 44 OLN	Survivorman		Ghost Hunters International		Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Survivorman		Ghost Hunters
	417	406 48 SPEED	Pinks -- All Out	Jacked!	Wrecked	Wrecked	Pass Time	Pass Time	Pinks -- All Out (HDTV)		Pinks Outtakes
family	552	543 20 YTV	iCarly	iCarly	iCarly	Sabrina-Witch	Malcolm-Mid.	Hates Chris	8 Simple Rules	What I Like	Family Biz
	557	541 39 FAM	Han. Montana	Wizards-Place	Sonny Chance	Zack & Cody	Overruled!	Han. Montana	Wizards-Place	Latest Buzz	Ned's School
	555	545 67 TOON	Jimmy Two	Johnny Test	Stoked	Total Drama	6TEEN (DVS)		Futurama	King of the Hill	*Ghost World*
cable variety	575	583 11 CMT	According-Jim	According-Jim	Home Improve.	Home Improve.	CMT Star Crossed		Reba	Reba	According-Jim
	553	546 17 TREE	Fourth King	Maggie-Beast	Babar	Zigby	Max & Ruby	Dragon (DVS)	Backyardigans	Ni Hao, Kai-lan	Go, Diego, Go!
	505	398 19 TWN	(5) EarthWatch One		EarthWatch One		EarthWatch Two				
	602	568 23 W	House-Sell	Confidential	Friends	Friends	*Home by Christmas* (2006, Drama) Linda Hamilton.				*Very Merry*
	521	560 24 TLC	American Chopper (N)		BBQ Pitmasters (N)		American Chopper		BBQ Pitmasters (HDTV)		Amer. Chopper
	603	561 25 FOOD	Heston's Feasts (N)		Ace of Cakes	Ace of Cakes	Dinner: Impossible		Unwrapped	Unwrapped	Heston Feast
	615	520 26 A&E	The First 48 (HDTV)		The First 48 (HDTV)		Steven Seagal	Steven Seagal	(10:01) The First 48		The First 48
	617	522 32 SHOW	Trailer Park	Trailer Park	The Outer Limits		Da Vinci's City Hall		Found.	Paradise Falls	Bones
	601	562 33 SLICE	X-Weighted "Valencia"		X-Weighted "Kendra"		ET Canada	Whatever	Work Out		Brat Camp
	-	633 34 ENC2	Filmography	(7:25) *Once in a Blue Moon* (1995, Fantasy)			*Mandela* ★★★ (1996, Documentary)				*Cry Freedom*
	520	505 35 DISC	Life "Primates" (N)		MythBusters		Daily Planet		Life "Plants"		Life
	620	523 36 BRAVO	*Everything's Gone Green* ★★★ (2006, Comedy)				Law & Order		Without a Trace		*The In Crowd*
	294	650 40 WPCH	Law & Order: SVU		*Crocodile Dundee* ★★ (1986, Comedy) Paul Hogan.				The Office	*Yours, Mine & Ours* ★★	
	626	547 41 COM	Just for Laughs		Air Farce	22 Minutes	Corner Gas	Name Is Earl	The Simpsons	South Park	Hot Box
	-	539 42 TCM	*It Happened on 5th Avenue*		*Fitzwilly* ★★★ (1967, Comedy) Dick Van Dyke, Edith Evans.				*Love Finds Andy Hardy* ★★ (1938)		
	628	584 43 SPIKE	TNA Wrestling (HDTV) (N)				Act. Invictus	MANswers	Game Gods	GameTrailers	UFC 107 Count
	522	516 45 HIST	Underworld Histories		Ice Road Truckers		Ancient Discoveries		Underworld Histories		After People
	627	528 46 SPACE	*SS Doomtrooper* (2006, Science Fiction) Corin Nemic.				InnerSpace (N)	Stargate SG-1		Star Trek: Next Gener.	
	-	- 47 AMC	(6) *The Four Feathers* ★★ (2002, Adventure)				*The Prince of Tides* ★★★ (1991, Romance) Nick Nolte, Barbra Streisand.				
	619	525 49 TROP	Bob & Doug	Bob & Doug	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	The Outer Limits		ET Canada	TV Made, Do It	Family Guy
	600	564 50 HGTV	Renovation	Disaster DIY	House Hunters	House Hunters	Holmes Inspection		Renovation	Disaster DIY	Holmes-Homes
	501	391 52 CTV	CTV News Tonight		News	CTV News	News	CTV News	News	CTV News	News
	504	508 70 BNN	Squeeze Play		Business News	Commodities	Market Call Tonight		Headline	Commodities	Squeeze Play
	526	507 92 VIVA	The Closer "Overkill"		Cold Case "Sleepover"		Psychic Inv.	Ghostly Enc.	Judging Amy		Missing
	269	350 93 APTN	Wapos Bay	By the Rapids	Over the Bolts	Moose TV	*Parenthood* ★★★ (1989, Comedy) Steve Martin, Mary Steenburgen.				
	-	- 94 MCP	World News	News	Sewing Maid	Kingdom-Wind	Vancouver	Shaktimaan	Dheeyan Ghar	Sadabahar	Connections
	571	581 100 MMM	VH1 Divas (N)				mmtop10.ca		VH1 Divas		
	570	580 101 MM	Jonas Brothers	Muchmusic Countdown			MuchTop11at11		You Can Dance		TBA
	581	566 102 MTV	Real World-Road Rules		Jersey Shore (N)		MTV Live	Sex, News-Roll	Peak Season	After	Jersey Shore
	-	- 116 TV5	Envoyé spécial				TV5 Le Journal	(9:35) Vous aurez le dernier mot			

critics' corner

The Border

What's coltan? It's an ore from which tantalum, used in electronics, is extracted. Like diamonds, it can be obtained from both clean and questionable sources. The Democratic Republic of Congo falls in the latter column because the coltan trade is linked to the violence there. In this new episode, Kessler, Darnell and Charlotte (James McGowan, Jim Codrington, Daisy Beaumont) discover a Canadian link to a Congolese coltan smuggling operation. 9 PM on CBRT

Everything's Gone Green

Crime doesn't pay — mentally anyway. In cash? Well, sometimes. In this 2006 comedy, Paulo Costanzo stars as Ryan, a slacker who works for a lottery magazine. When he's offered a position laundering money, he actually agrees. But after the cash starts rolling in, he realizes he feels too guilty to do anything with it. Steph Song, JR Bourne and Susan Hogan also star. 7 PM on BRAVO

Calgary's Parker House honoured
Where magazine has announced its list of Best New Restaurants of 2009. Calgary's Parker House Grill and Wine Bar made the cut. Visit where.ca for the complete list. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Urban Foodie

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Pimento's pizza creations on wheels

ANDREE LAU
CalgaryUrbanFoodie@gmail.com

Pimento's Mobile Pizzeria
Bridgeland/Renfrew, Calgary
(403) 515-0065

Signature Dish: Italian Cowboy
Rating: ●●●½
Dinner & drinks for 2: $18

Many Calgarians who lamented when Pimento's Pizzeria closed its doors in Bridgeland can rejoice once again. The former takeout place has been reborn in an old bread delivery van outfitted with a wood-burning oven.

On Friday and Saturday nights (and for certain special requests), Chef Mario will park the van outside your home and make thin-crust creations from scratch.

There is a catch: Pimento's currently only serves the northeast area of Bridgeland and Renfrew (though Chef Mario can be sweet-talked into crossing those boundaries for big parties and festivals).

Suddenly, visiting a friend who lives in a lovely Bridgeland condo became a priority. I finagled an invitation and on the appointed evening, the van pulled up outside her building.

In the vehicle's tiny kitchen, Chef Mario holds court, slicing red peppers, telling jokes, and kneading and hand-tossing the fresh dough.

The Capricciosa ($16/$20/$25) is full of bocconcini, prosciutto cotto, mushrooms, artichokes and black olives, topped with fresh basil. The pomodoro sauce is made simply with Italian organic tomatoes, garlic, and salt. The Napoletana ($12/$14/$17) sings with anchovies, capers, garlic, and oregano.

Chef Mario also does full catering, including delicious Italian appetizers, from his van.

On the web

- Get recipes and more great food content at metronews.ca/recipes

ANDREE LAU/FOR METRO CALGARY

The Napoletana ($12).

Dining out

BIG BAND BRUNCH
Enjoy a buffet brunch and a 20-piece big band at the Ironwood Stage & Grill (1429 9th Ave. S.E.) this Saturday and next Saturday from noon to 3 p.m. Cost is $20 for adults, and $15 for students & children. Call (403) 269-5581 for more information. ANDREE LAU/ FOR METRO CALGARY

Global Peasant blog online

- Travel along with Diane Thompson's culinary adventures in her Global Peasant blog.
- Check out metronews.ca/globalpeasant for a recipe of Orange Spice Molasses Cookies.

In brief

FUNDRAISER Join the CBC and Suncor in raising $800,000 for the Calgary Food Bank until Dec. 24. For every $1 donated, the food bank can distribute $4 worth of food. Last year's drive helped feed more than 89,000 people, almost half of which were children. Donors also get chance to win prizes. More info at cbc.ca/calgary.
ANDREE LAU/ FOR METRO CALGARY

Hilton's humble adobe invaded
Nicky Hilton has been burgled, femalefirst.co.uk reports. The break-in at the blonde socialite's Hollywood home was reported at 3.30 p.m. Tuesday and a host of expensive items were stolen. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Celebrity Buzz

Nicolas Cage's ex suing his pants off

The mother of his 18-year-old child is accusing the actor of fraud

NO, ANYTHING BUT THE YACHTS! Nicolas Cage's financial and legal nightmare continues to grow, people.com reports.

Christina Fulton, mother of Cage's eldest child Weston, 18, is suing the actor for fraud and breach of contract, alleging she's been caught in the web of his financial mismanagement and is now more than $1.2 million US in debt herself, Los Angeles court papers show.

Cage stated in an October lawsuit he faces financial ruin after allegedly being duped by a former accountant, Samuel Levin. The actor currently owes $6.3 million in back taxes, recently defaulted on a $2 million loan, and has begun a massive sell-off of homes, cars, yachts and other possessions to recoup his losses.

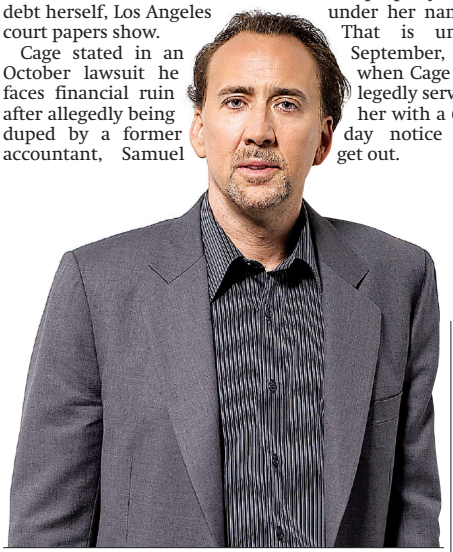
Fulton, 42, a former actress, says she was provided an L.A. home years ago by Cage in exchange for raising Weston, and believed the property was under her name. That is until September, when Cage allegedly served her with a 60-day notice to get out.

Fulton says that because of Cage and Levin's negligence, she now owes the IRS more than $1 million, in addition to $250,000 in unpaid credit card debt. She says the credit card was supposed to be paid off regularly by Cage and that fraudulent charges were racked up by a staffer hired by the actor who didn't undergo a sufficient background check.

All told, Fulton says damages to her exceed $13 million.

Levin, the accountant, has countersued Cage, stating the actor's financial collapse was due to his "compulsive, self-destructive spending."

METRO WORLD NEWS



Madonna's three kids dance it out on stage

MADGE'S OWN DANCE DANCE REVOLUTION It looks like that it won't just be Madonna's daughter Lourdes featuring in her work — four-year-old son David has revealed a love of the superstar's work, people.com reports.

"He knows every song, every word, every step, and he wants to wear all the costumes," Madonna, 51, told the British morning show GMTV.

Coming after stage-ready Lourdes, 13, joined her mom in the video for Celebration, performing clearly runs in the family. During her recent Sticky & Sweet world tour, Madonna's nine-year-old son with director Guy Ritchie, Rocco joined her on stage.

"When he jumped on stage to dance in my last show, I was shocked actually," she said.

"And secretly, unbeknownst to me, they're all studying privately with my dancers. And Rocco comes out and busts out like a moonwalk or you know, some kind of break-dancing move.

"He's always been quite shy so I was shocked when he wanted to be in the show."

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Tequila shoots to the altar

SALT. TEQUILA. LIME. I DO. Tila Tequila is getting married to Johnson & Johnson heiress Casey Johnson — or so she said Wednesday morning in a rambling USTREAM video, usmagazine.com reports.

"We have an announcement," the 27-year-old MTV reality star began. "...So are you ready for this big announcement that's going to change our lives?

"I love you guys so much, we are giving you the exclusive first — Tila army fans — tonight, my girlfriend has asked me to marry her!"

She then flashed a "17-carat diamond ring from my baby."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Celebrity tweets

Paris Hilton comes out strongly against burglary, Stan Lee laments his inability to ask for money, Tom Arnold breaks the rules, and John Cleese got through eye surgery despite the pressure from his fans.

• @parishilton I HATE people who steal! It's so wrong! I hope they catch whoever did this! There has been so many robberies lately. So scary!

• @smilinstanlee Here's proof I'm a lousy businessman: Other guys become movie stars and get rich. I become a cameo star-- and get thank you's.

• @TomArnold In Shanghai doing @Asia_Uncut - nice people but Twitter banned here, oops

• @JohnCleese All well, the deed was done, and I can now see again... just... thank you all for your prayers and death threats (you know who you are).

METRO WORLD NEWS

Barton is okay with kissing girls

GIRLS ARE EASY Mischa Barton finds it peculiar that she's often asked to lock lips with another girl on-screen — she's done it three times in her young career — but she doesn't think it's a bad thing, according to Hollyscoop. "I don't know why that keeps coming up," says Barton. "It doesn't annoy me that much. It's so much easier to kiss another girl. You're so much more relaxed filming and you can have a laugh. It can get a bit tense with a guy."

METRO WORLD NEWS

Rihanna's secret silver screen wish

KISSES DON'T LIE Rihanna wouldn't mind giving acting a try. And she has just the role for herself. "I'd love to be an assassin. Either that or a lesbian. Maybe both! Hey, a gay assassin, there's nothing hotter than that," she tells the Daily Star. When asked who she'd like to play her onscreen girlfriend, the singer insists, "Megan Fox – hands down. She's yummy."

METRO WORLD NEWS

Fergie thinks about having children

A FERGALICIOUS FAMILY Possibly hoping to put their recent alleged cheating scandal behind them, Fergie says she and Josh Duhammel are ready to start a family.

"Am I getting broody? Oh, definitely," she tells British Cosmopolitan. "I want to finish this tour first before trying to start a family."

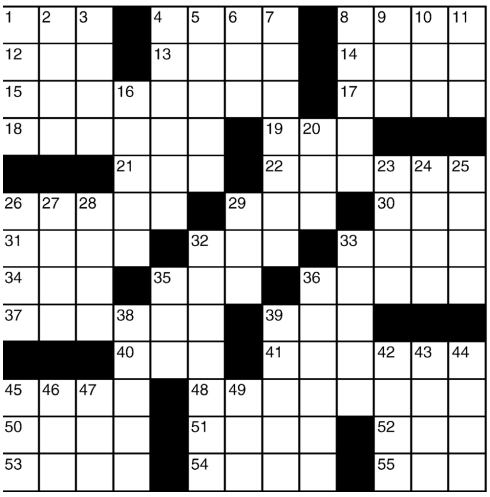
METRO WORLD NEWS

BT BREAKFAST TELEVISION

Today Cloudy -13 C / -19 C
Friday Sunny -13 C / -19 C
Saturday Sunny -23 C / -29 C

Take Five

Andrew Schultz, Meteorologist – Breakfast Television
"I get to spread the word on how your day, evening or weekend will shape up with our ever-changing weather here in Alberta."
WEEKDAYS AT 6 A.M.



Sudoku

For more/less challenging Sudoku puzzles, visit metronews.ca

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

	8						5	
4				8				2
5			9		1			7
		3	6		8	4		
				4				
		2	3		7	1		
6			4		2			1
2				1				9
	7						8	

ACROSS

1 Recipe meas.
4 Circulate
8 Wield an axe
12 Blackbird
13 Staffer
14 Posterior
15 Chickening-out feeling
17 Aware of
18 Rectangular
19 Spread seeds
21 Chart format
22 Exces-sively
26 Old anesthetic
29 Conk out
30 Born
31 Curds' mate
32 Parcel of land
33 Pack cargo
34 Historic time
35 Jewel
36 Saturn has many
37 Legislation
39 Old French coin
40 Coffee vessel
41 Capital of Oman
45 Creche trio
48 Ready to rumble
50 Not "fer"
51 Parliamentarian, perhaps
52 Lawyers' org.
53 Safecracker
54 Albanian coins
55 Bygone space station

DOWN

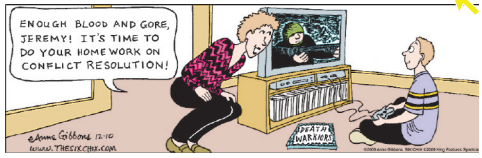
1 Mexican entree
2 Uppity one
3 Dosage, maybe
4 Dragon of Norse myth
5 Loyal subject
6 Rhyming tribute
7 Diver's garb
8 Mob
9 Coop denizen
10 Feedbag morsel
11 In favor of
16 Sleepy companion?
20 Inseparable
23 "Do — others ..."
24 Trotsky or Russell
25 Evergreens
26 Basin accessory
27 From one end to t'other
28 Get better
29 Comic DeLuise
32 Humorous hoax
33 March King
35 Wildebeest
36 Almond Joys minus almonds
38 Cake enhancement
39 Smug smile
42 Study all night
43 Both (Pref.)
44 Autocrat
45 Spring part
46 Time of your life?
47 Showbiz job
49 "Ulalume" writer

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

6	7	4	8	2	3	9	5	1
9	1	8	5	6	7	4	3	2
5	2	3	4	9	1	8	6	7
8	6	2	7	4	5	3	1	9
3	9	7	2	1	8	6	4	5
1	4	5	9	3	6	2	7	8
7	3	9	6	5	2	1	8	4
4	5	1	3	8	9	7	2	6
2	8	6	1	7	4	5	9	3

On the web

For more games and 60 additional daily cartoon strips, visit metronews.ca



Metro Recipe of the Day

Quick Garlic Pasta Sauce

Submitted by:
Debra Nasuti,
Winnipeg, MB

INGREDIENTS:

1 Cup olive oil
1/4 Cup water
3 Tablespoon paprika
6 Clove garlic chopped fine (more if desired)
1/2 Teaspoon salt (adjust to your taste)
2 Teaspoon parsley chopped
1/2 Cup grated parmesan cheese
1/2 chili pepper chopped fine (optional)

METHOD:

1. Heat oil and water over low heat. Add garlic and fry gently you do not want to burn the garlic. Add paprika, salt, and chili peppers (if you choose) and fry for 5 minutes. Keep stirring another 5 minutes. Paprika will thicken to a sauce like texture. Turn heat up slowly over the 5 minutes and watch that it does not burn.

2. Pour over pasta of your choice. Add the cheese and parsley and toss.

SERVES 4
PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES
COOK TIME: 10 MINUTES

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Horoscopes by Sally Brompton sallybrompton.com

For Sally's expanded daily and weekend horoscopes, visit metronews.ca

ARIES
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
Your confidence may be lower than usual but bear in mind that what seems low to you still seems high to most other people.

TAURUS
APRIL 21-MAY 21
There are some suspicious things going on at the moment and you can't help but wonder if someone is plotting against you. Don't overreact.

GEMINI
MAY 22-JUNE 21
Like it or not you will have to admit that someone you thought you could trust has been taking advantage of your generous nature.

CANCER
JUNE 22-JULY 22
In the greater scheme of things coincidences are rare, so be on your guard if a dangerous pattern seems to be repeating itself.

LEO
JULY 23-AUG 23
Hard luck stories will be two-a-penny today, but not one of them is true. A little suspicion is no bad thing.

VIRGO
AUG 24-SEPT 22
It's good to speak your mind, of course, but if you are wise you won't say anything too outrageous today.

LIBRA
SEPT 23-OCT 23
Come and go as you please today and ignore those who say you should stay where you are and see to your responsibilities.

SCORPIO
OCT 24-NOV 22
The only real danger today is that you might be a bit too forgiving for your own good. It might send the wrong signal.

SAGITTARIUS
NOV 23-DEC 21
Don't worry too much if a loved one is difficult to get along with today because there is absolutely nothing wrong with your relationship.

CAPRICORN
DEC 22-JAN 20
If you are finding it hard to reach an agreement with someone about a business-related issue you are advised to leave it a day or two.

AQUARIUS
JAN 21-FEB 18
By all means use your imagination and find ways to boost your wealth and wellbeing, but avoid wishful thinking.

PISCES
FEB 19-MARCH 20
You may be reluctant to cross swords with a rival today but the planets warn if you back down you can be bullied every day of the week.

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metrotube of the day

Today in history

1898 – Spanish-American War: The Treaty of Paris is signed, officially ending the conflict.
1901 – The first Nobel Prizes are awarded.
1968 – Japan's biggest heist, the still-unsolved 300 million yen robbery, is carried out in Tokyo.
1996 – Rwandan Genocide: Military advisor to the United Nations Secretary-General and head of the Military Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the United Nations Maurice Baril recommends that the UN multi-national forces in Zaire stand down.

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$25,995
B909824

2008 Nissan Titan SE
King cab, V8, power windows/locks, A/C,

$30,995
B909835

2009 Infinity FX35
AWD,loaded

$48,995
B911922

2008 Nissan Frontier
4X4, king cab,V6, alloys, Nav, loaded, cloth

$28,995
B911903

2006 Infinity FX35
V6, loaded

$34,995
B909826

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Alloys, A/C, Bose 6 disc CD, heated seats

$18,995
B908795

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Crew cab, loaded

$31,995
B911911

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B907763

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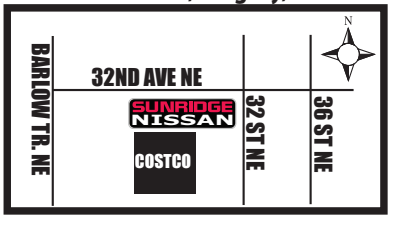

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